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6d. FORTNIGHTLY

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INDOMITABLE MALTA thrills to the sound of the pipes and drums as British troops, followed by an enthusiastic crowd, march down a badly bombed street. Enduring the heaviest blitz ever concentrated on one small area, the people of Malta, inspired by the resolute bearing and courage of the Governor, Sir William Dobbie, have given to the world an unequalled example of calm fortitude and smiling bravery. Malta has deserved well of the Empire. (See article in page 639)

Photo, Sport & General

INDIA: SIR STAFFORD OPENS THE DOOR

With the Japanese armies moving steadily up the Burmese valleys to the gates of India, with the Bay of Bengal laid open to the Japanese fleets by the fall of Singapore—the British Government in London decided to send an emissary to India to enlist the support of its people, and, perhaps still more important, of its politicians, in the war effort of the United Nations. The man choosen for this difficult and invidious task was Sir Stafford Cripps, the eminent lawyer who, after being expelled from the Labour Party because of his too advanced views, proved an exceedingly capable ambassador to Moscow and is now Lord Privy Seal and a member of the War Cabinet.

Sir Stafford Cripps' appointment was announced by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons on March 11. "He carries with him the full confidence of the Government," said Mr. Churchill, "and he has in their name to procure the necessary measure of assent, not only from the Hindu majority but also from those great minorities, amongst which the Moslems are the most numerous and on many grounds pre-eminent." Travelling by air, Sir Stafford arrived in Delhi on March 23, and forthwith issued a statement to the Press:

"I have come here because I am, as I have always been, a great friend and admirer of India," he said, "and because I want to play my part as a member of the British War Cabinet in reaching a final settlement of these political difficulties which have long vexed our relations. Once these questions are resolved, and I hope they may be quickly and satisfactorily resolved, the Indian people will be able to associate themselves fully and freely not only with Great Britain and the other Dominions, but with our great allies, Russia, China, and the United States of America, and together we can assert our determination to preserve the liberty of the people of the world. There is no time to lose . . ."

Ensued a period of intense discussion, of ardent and sustained deliberation. Never had New Delhi seen such a coming and going, hardly affected even by the heat of the tropical day. Within 24 hours of his arrival, and while he was still a guest in Viceroy's House, Sir Stafford Cripps had met General Wavell, India's C.-in-C., members of the Viceroy's Council, and a galaxy of provincial governors. Swift on their heels came those who claimed to speak for India's 400 millions, for prince and peasant, for Brahmin and pariah, for the leagues in which the politically conscious Indians—so few compared with the great illiterate mass—are bound by ties of sentiment and interest. Day after day went by. Hopes were raised, died away, raised again into new life. Formulas were framed, proposals propounded; rumour ran wild through the teeming bazaars, and even the corridors of official Delhi echoed to the whispers of controversy.

Then on March 29 the text was published of the "Draft Declaration of Discussion with Indian Leaders." For the first time the terms of the proposals which Sir Stafford Cripps had taken to India were revealed. After stating that his Majesty's Government had as their object "the creation of a new Indian Union, which shall constitute a Dominion associated with the United Kingdom and the other Dominions by a common allegiance to the Crown, but equal to them in every respect, in no ways subordinate, in any aspect of its domestic or external affairs," the document proceeded to promise that immediately on the cessation of hostilities steps would be taken to set up an elected body, charged with the task of framing a new constitution for India. H.M. Government would undertake to accept and implement forthwith the constitution so framed, subject only to the right of any province to retain its present constitutional position or to receive the same full status as the Indian Union. A treaty would be negotiated between H.M. Government and the constitution-making body, covering all necessary matters arising out of the complete transfer of responsibility from British to Indian hands; it would make provision for the protection of racial and religious minorities, but would not impose any restriction on the power of the Indian Union to decide in the future its relationship to the other member states of the British Commonwealth.

Finally it was stated that during the critical period which now faces India, and until the new constitution could be framed, his Majesty's Government must inevitably bear the responsibility for and retain the control and direction of the defence of India as part of their world war effort. The task of organizing to the full the military, moral and material resources of India must be the responsibility of the Government of India, with the cooperation of the peoples of India, and so the immediate and effective participation of the leaders of the principal sections of the Indian people was invited, in the counsels of their country, of the Commonwealth, and of the United Nations.

Those leaders rejoined with no certain or united voice. None save the Liberals showed any willingness to accept the proposals as they stood. The Hindu Mahasabha and the Sikhs of the Punjab hastened to give a point-blank refusal. The Moslem League was gratified at the virtual acknowledgement of the principle of Pakistan—self-determination for the Moslem provinces—but waited to see how the Congress cat would jump. The Indian Princes were lukewarm for the most part in their attitude, and the Scheduled Classes were similarly unenthusiastic. But the main challenge to the scheme came from the Congress party.

Behind closed doors the Congress leaders wrestled and wrangled, and only now and again did there emerge a murmur of the wordy strife. It was generally believed that Pandit Nehru was in favour of acceptance of the Government's proposals, and also maybe Dr. Azad, the President of Congress; but against them was ranged a solid block of opposition, of men who refused to believe that any good thing could come out of British promises. At last they came to an agreement. They gave their answer, and it was "No."

In a resolution, published on April 11, the Congress Working Committee expressed regret that, though self-determination for the people of India was accepted in principle in the British Government's proposals, it was fettered and circumscribed and its execution was to be deferred to the future, until after cessation of hostilities. They objected to the "complete ignoring" of 90 millions of people in the Indian states, and to the power given to a province to remain outside the Union. Then the question of defence was another stumbling block: the Committee (they declared) had no desire to upset in the middle of the war the present military organization and they accepted that the higher strategy of the war should be controlled by the War Cabinet in London, which would have an Indian member. But they strongly objected to the continuation of the India Office, and asked for definite assurances that the new government of India would function as a free Government, the members of which would act as members of a Cabinet.

SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS on the way to India. "You have done everything in human power," said Mr. Churchill when the Cripps mission had ended in disappointment. *British Official: Crown Copyright*

In his reply, Sir Stafford Cripps referred to these suggestions:

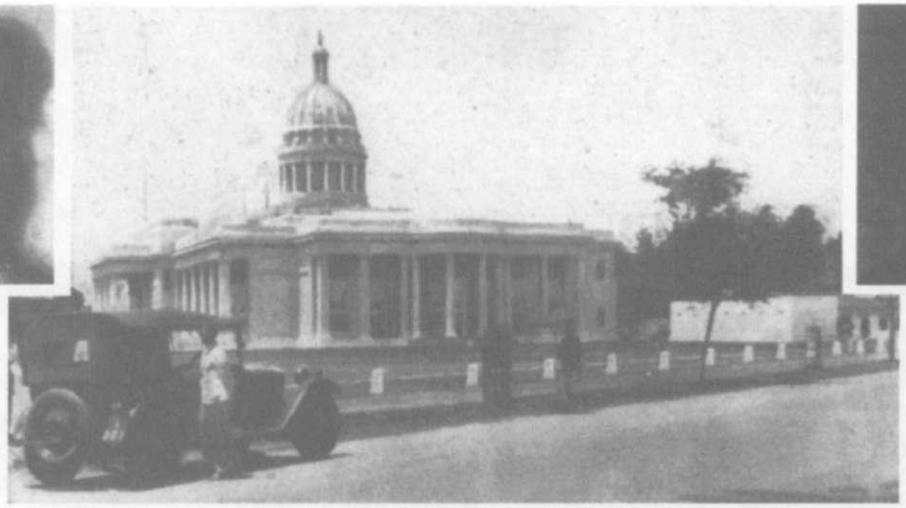
The first, that the constitution might be changed now, had been made for the first time the night before, and it was generally believed that it was practically impossible in the middle of the war. As for the second, the establishment of a truly national government: this would involve constitutional changes of the most complicated character and on a very large scale. Were such a system to be introduced under the existing circumstances the Cabinet (nominated presumably by the major political organizations) would be responsible to nobody but itself, could not be removed, and could in fact constitute an absolute dictatorship by the majority. This suggestion would be rejected by all the minorities in India, nor would it be consistent with the pledges given by H.M. Government to protect the rights of these minorities.

Maulana Azad in a further message, declared that the Working Committee "was not interested in Congress as such gaining power, but *was* interested in the Indian people as a whole having freedom and power." (An interesting comment on this is Sir Stafford Cripps' remark at Karachi on April 13: "Congress wanted all or nothing—they could not get all, so they got nothing"). So the negotiations broke down. But the door to future success had been opened.

E. Royston Pike

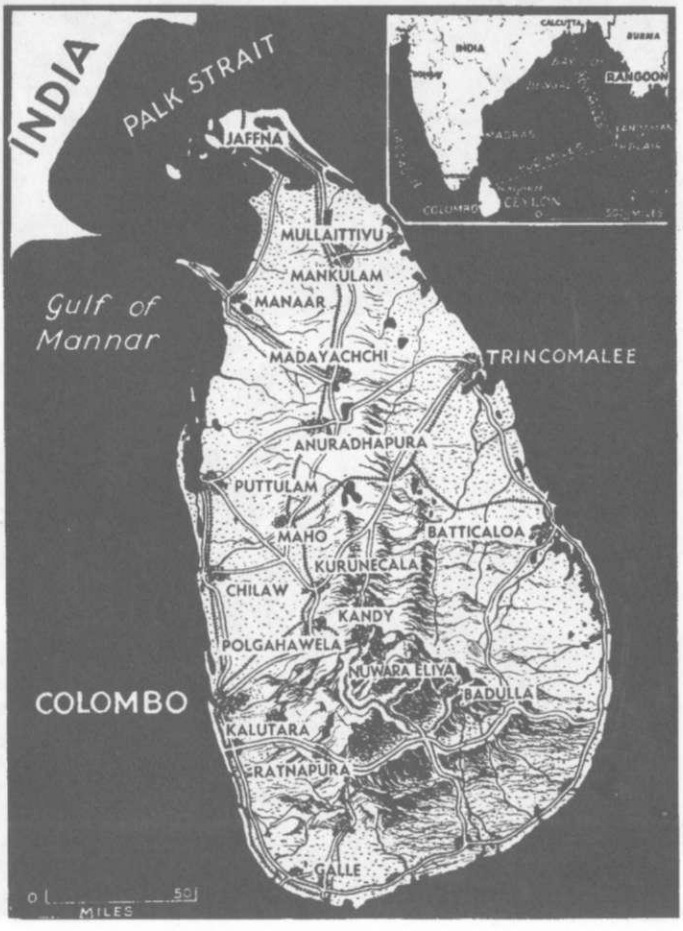
Colombo Where the Air Defences Were Ready

Lt.-Gen. Sir H. R. POWNALL, who assumed the military command of the island of Ceylon on March 14, went as Chief of Staff with the B.E.F. in France when war broke out. *Photo, British Official*



Air Vice-Marshal J. H. D'ALBIAC, Air Officer commanding the R.A.F. in Ceylon, was in charge of the British air forces in Greece during the campaign there. *Photo British Official*

Above, the new town hall, Colombo; and below, a view of the quayside. Colombo has one of the largest artificial harbours in the world, with an area of over six hundred acres. The present population of the city is about 300,000.

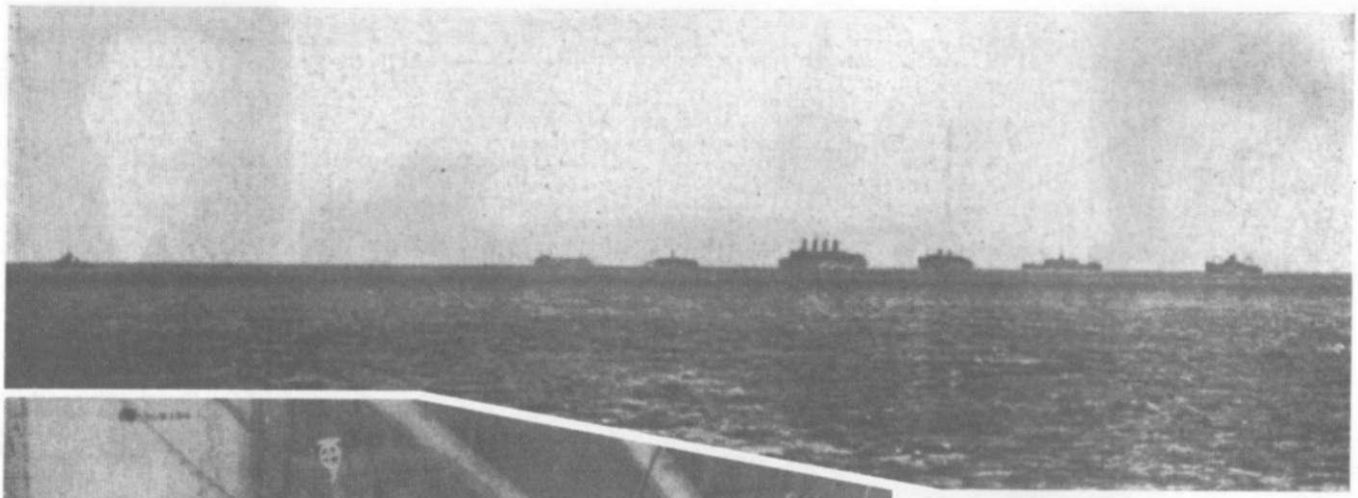


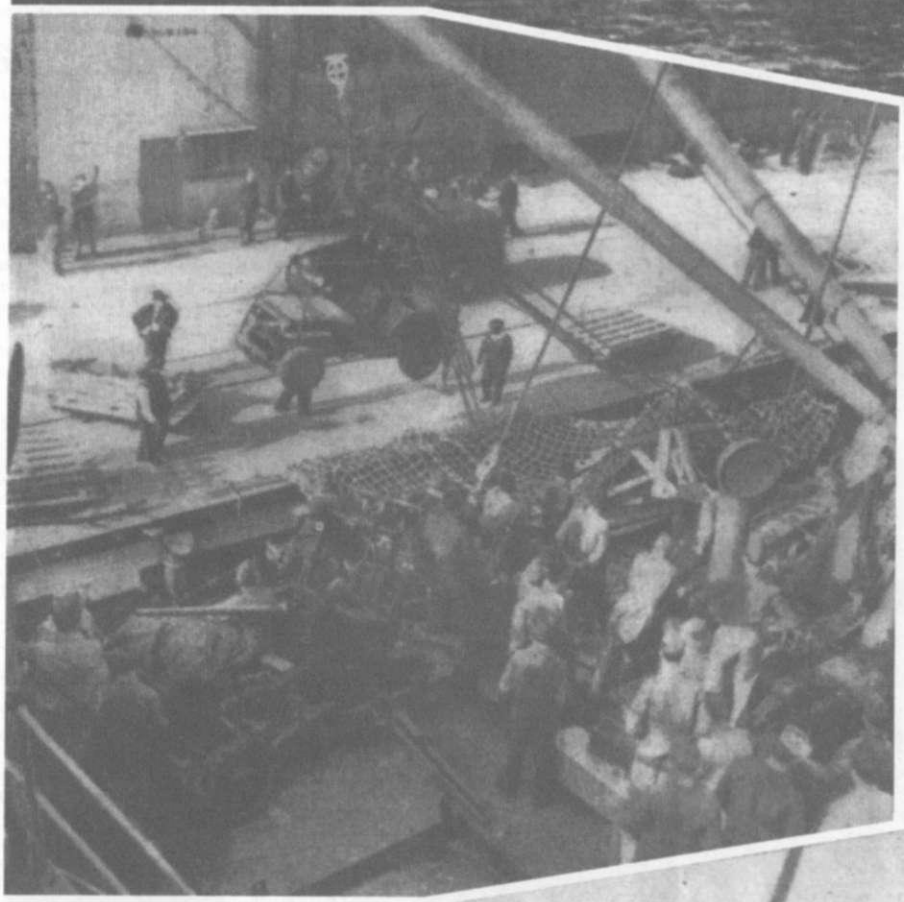
Above, one of the main streets of Colombo, capital of Ceylon. Right, relief map of the island of Ceylon. The inset map shows how Ceylon and Calcutta lie at equal distances from the Japanese-occupied Andaman Islands. *Photos, Dorien Leigh; map, The Daily Mail*

IN an attempt to repeat their surprise attack on Pearl Harbour, the Japanese launched a heavy air raid on Colombo, British naval and air base in Ceylon, on the morning of April 5. But this time the enemy found the defences ready, and of the 75 raiders engaged 27 were destroyed and 25 others badly damaged.

Broadcasting from Colombo after the raid, Admiral Layton, C.-in-C., Ceylon, referring to the Japanese losses, said: "It is a great piece of work, and I feel sure we shall join together in tendering our congratulations to the Air Vice-Marshal and his gallant officers and men who were responsible for this outstanding success." Admiral Layton added: "It is not a matter of luck that we got off so lightly. It is entirely due to the manner in which we have prepared ourselves to meet this danger, and as long as we do not relax and continue to work together with a firm determination to succeed, we need have no fears as to the future."

America's Soldiers Arrive Safely in Australia





U.S. CONVOY is seen above heading for its destination somewhere in the Pacific Ocean. Left, war material being loaded on to a vessel about to leave for the S.W. Pacific with a convoy from an American port.

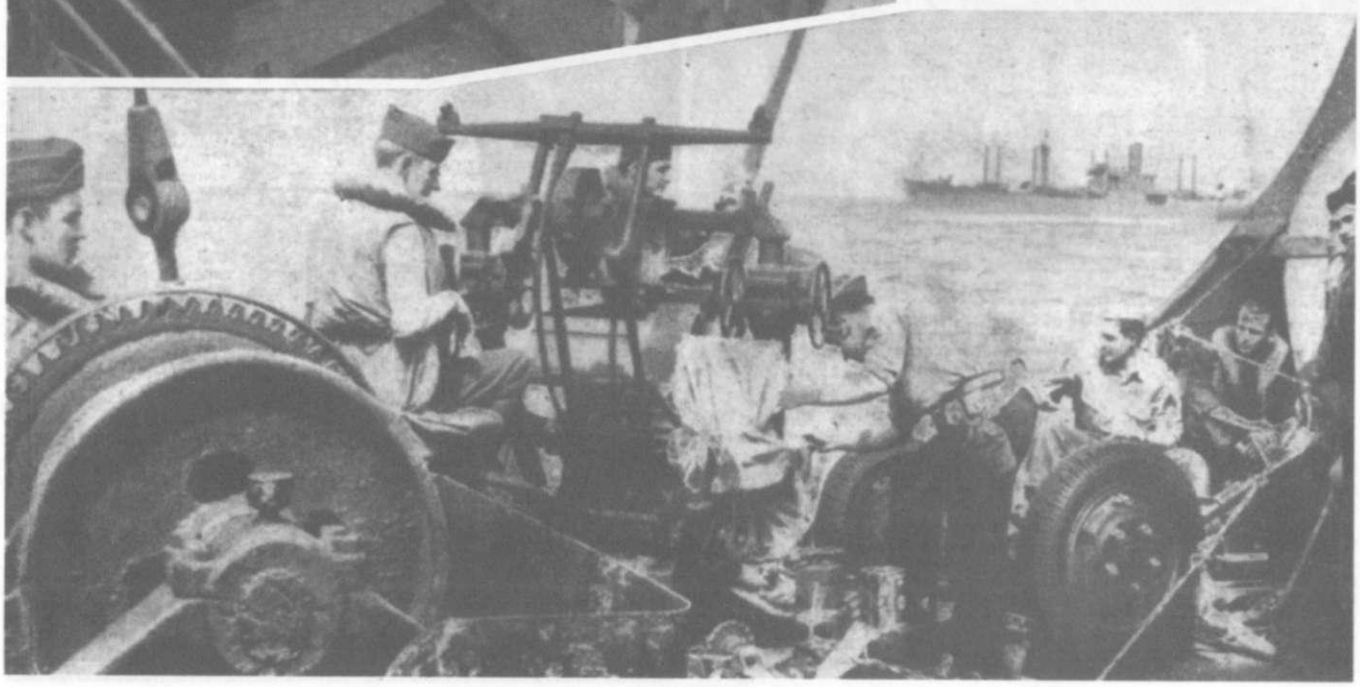
THOUSANDS of American soldiers, airmen and ground crews have crossed and are crossing from America to theatres of war in the S.W. Pacific, escorted by units of the American and Imperial navies. Large numbers of these men, who will fight many thousands of miles from their homes, had never been on a sea voyage before, for many of them come from States in the Middle West.

William Courtenay, "Sunday Times" Correspondent with the American Forces in Australia, describing his ocean crossing in an American troopship, said that his voyage was uneventful save for a storm on the last two days "with visibility at zero and a gale blowing at seventy miles an hour on the surface for 48 hours. The troops were thrilled at the experience of the long voyage and safe arrival at the journey's end. All looked forward to quick action, most agreeing that they would be out of America for well over two years."

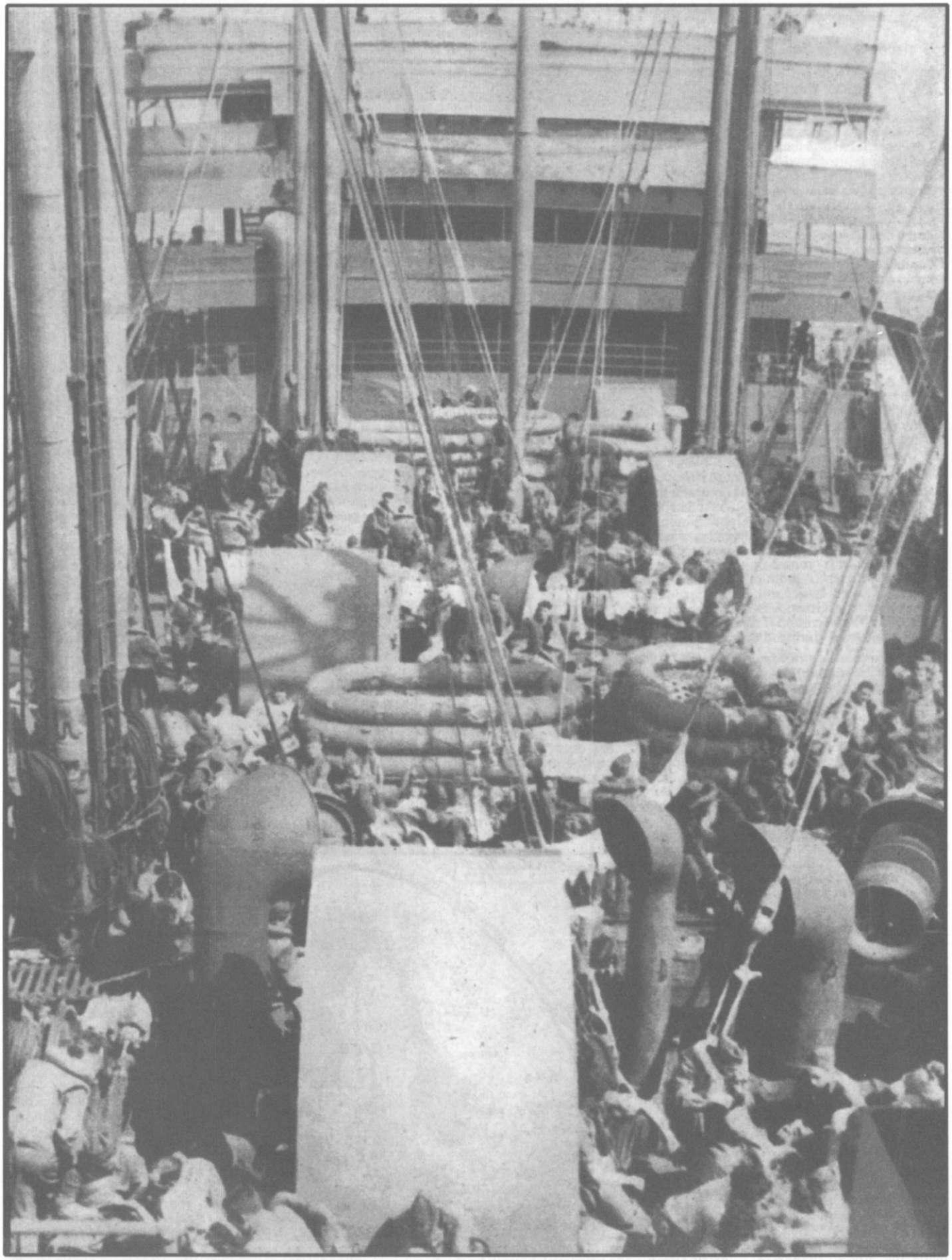
With the troops travelled Negro stevedore battalions, to unload the great stores of war material and equipment which accompanied the fighting men, who are seasoned soldiers, ready to go into action anywhere at a moment's notice.

Below, anti-aircraft gunners aboard one of the transports included in an important American convoy which safely reached Australia.

Photos, Keystone, Planet News



Crowded Decks for the Pacific Crossing

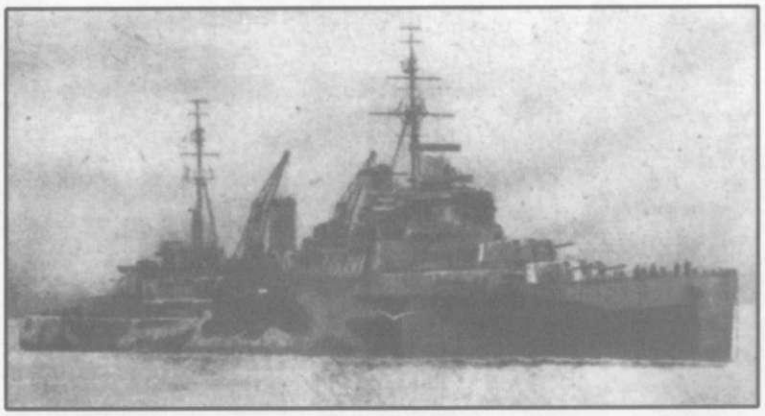


EN ROUTE FOR AUSTRALIA, these American soldiers on a transport forming part of an important convoy are enjoying the brilliant sunshine of the Pacific crossing. All are wearing lifebelts because of danger from Japanese sea and air raiders, and rubber rafts are stacked ready for any emergency. Some of the men have obviously been washing their "smalls" to judge from the lines of washing hung out to dry.

Photo, Planet News

Russia's Murmansk Door Must Be Kept Open

Vitally imperative is it that the sea route to North Russia should be kept open, since it is the main route by which British and American war supplies are being sent to Stalin—and Stalin's army is the main obstacle to Hitler's victory on the continent of Europe. Because of this, Nazi attempts to close Russia's Arctic Gateway are being intensified.



H.M.S. TRINIDAD, Fiji Class cruiser of 8,000 tons, crippled one of the German destroyers which recently attacked a large Allied Russia-bound convoy and gave chase to two others which escaped. *Photo, British Official*

WELL beyond the Arctic Circle a great convoy of Allied ships, carrying American and British planes, tanks and munitions to Murmansk, and strongly escorted by British cruisers and destroyers—one report had it, by an aircraft carrier as well—was spotted by Nazi reconnaissance planes north-west of Tromsoe on March 27. The news was radioed to the Nazi authorities in Norway, and squadrons of Junkers 88 dive-bombers at once took off to attack the convoy. But as they dived through the snow-clouds they were met by Fleet Air Arm fighters and a terrific anti-aircraft barrage. Within a few minutes the attackers had had enough and they—or what was left of them—winged away to their base.

But the Nazi reconnaissance planes continued to shadow the convoy, and it was plain to the Commodore that another attack might be expected at any moment, whether from the air or by some of the German warships which were known to be in Norwegian waters. At Trondheim was based a heavy German naval squadron comprising (so it was reported) the Tirpitz, Admiral Scheer, Admiral Hipper, Prinz Eugen, and auxiliary units. Moreover, the German destroyer squadrons based on Tromsoe and Trondheim had both been reinforced during the past ten days.

On the morning of Sunday, March 29, the naval attack started, when a German destroyer flotilla began to shell the convoy. But for once the weather was in our favour, since high seas and heavy snowstorms every now and again hid the ships of the convoy from the destroyers, and the British escort ships at once hit back vigorously in defence of their charges. Despite very bad visibility, salvos from the Trinidad (Capt. L. S. Saunders, R.N.), one of our latest cruisers, crashed on to the leading Nazi destroyer and in a few minutes left it a crippled and blazing hulk. Then the Trinidad set out to chase the other enemy destroyers, which at once sought safety in flight. They escaped in the snowstorm.

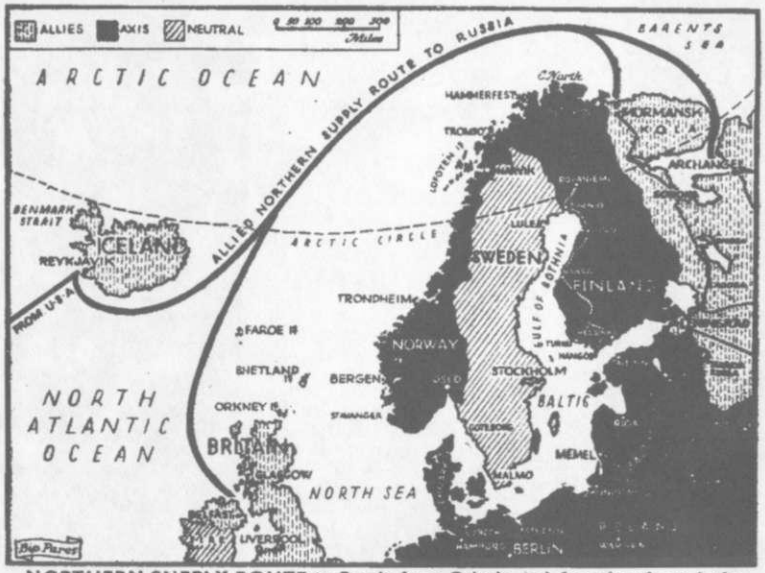
A few hours later there came another attack by Nazi destroyers. Again they were unsuccessful, and one of them was hit by gunfire from H.M.S. Eclipse (Lt.-Cmdr. E. Mack, R.N.), lost speed and eventually stopped. Two more enemy destroyers arrived on the scene, however, before the *coup de grâce* could be given, and the Eclipse had to break off the action and return to the convoy.

The convoy sailed on, but it was attacked yet again, for the fourth time, just as it was entering Kola Bay, the inlet in which lies the harbour of Murmansk. This time destroyers from Tromsoe made the attack, supported by dive-bombers from Kirkenes and Petsamo and a pack of U-boats. Things were looking pretty bad when, in response to a message from the Commodore to the Soviet Naval H.Q., a number of Russian fighters took off from Murmansk and sped to engage in the battle. Soon a full-scale air-sea-battle ranged over a wide area, but once again the attackers were foiled and the long convoy steamed triumphantly into Murmansk. Berlin admitted the sinking of a Nazi warship, but claimed with ridiculous exaggeration that heavy loss had been inflicted on the convoy and their naval escort. For their part, the British Admiralty admitted that the Trinidad and Eclipse had both suffered some damage, but both had returned safely to harbour and there were very few casualties.

So one more convoy had got through—one more, for, judging from the Nazis' reports of the activities of their U-boats in Arctic waters, the Barents Sea in particular, it was but one of many. For months past, aided by the twenty hours of winter darkness in every twenty-four, guns, tanks, planes and munitions of every kind have been pouring into Murmansk; and now that the ice has melted they will be pouring into Archangel too. It has been generally assumed that they have been destined for the main battle-front between the Baltic and the Black Sea, but it is interesting to note that some Nazi writers have expressed the view that the war material has been piling up in Murmansk ready to be used in a great Scandinavian offensive to be launched by the British and Russians together in the spring—an offensive aimed at occupying the northern coast of Norway, pinching off the narrow strip of Finland, and so effecting a land junction of the British and Russian forces. Maybe this is but a Nazi dream, but it might have the makings of a very bad dream indeed for the Nazis, since they would be faced with the necessity of sending reinforcements and supplies to a front in the Far North, while at the same time they were mounting their last, most desperate and most determined offensive against the Russians in the Ukraine and the Caucasus. Thus they would have to maintain a north-south supply line cutting right across the main east-west line—a delicate and potentially dangerous operation.

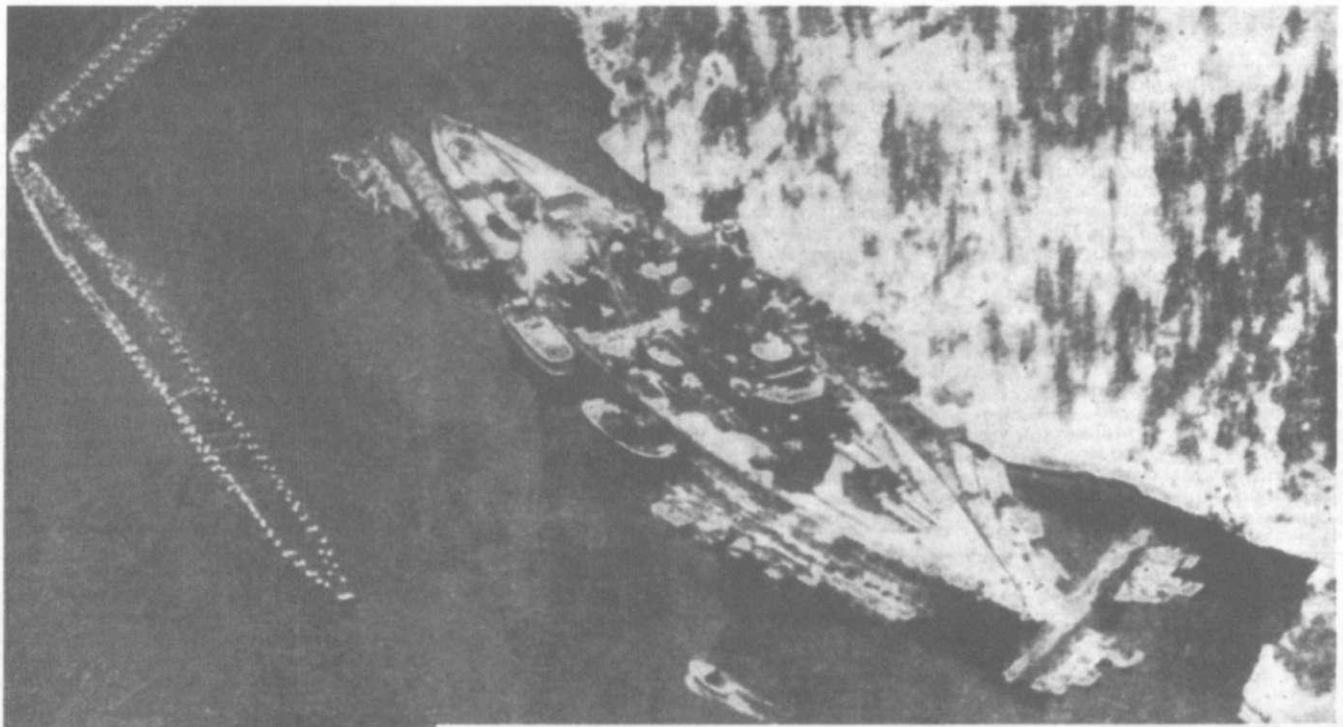
But there is the possibility that the Germans will do the attacking at Murmansk. From Stockholm recently came a report of a conference held at the H.Q. of Gen. Dietl, commander of the German-Finnish forces at Petsamo, at which Field-Marshal Mannerheim, Finland's C.-in-C., was reported to have agreed to a request—or a demand—that the Finns should bear the brunt of an offensive to be launched shortly against Murmansk and Soroka on the White Sea—in other words, a renewal of the offensive which has been halted since last July, when the Finns and their Austrian allies reached the river Litsa, a mere 15 miles inside Soviet territory from the Finnish frontier.

Whatever form the offensive takes, whether the Nazi-Finns initiate the offensive or whether it is snatched from their hands by the Russians, Murmansk remains in the front line of importance. Even in the last war it was important because of the railway to Petrograd, and here it was that in 1918 British, French and American troops carried on an ill-fated expedition against the Bolshevists and "White" Finns. Today it is much more important, when its population has grown from a mere 2,500 or 3,000 to some 120,000, and it is Russia's most important fishing and shipping centre in the Arctic, and a principal base of the Red Navy, well-equipped with modern docks and shipyards. Particularly rapid has been its growth since the double-tracking of the Leningrad railway and the completion of the White Sea Canal. Although it is 600 miles north of Leningrad, which is ice-bound in winter, Murmansk's harbour is open all the year round, thanks entirely to a stray current from the comparatively warm Gulf Stream.

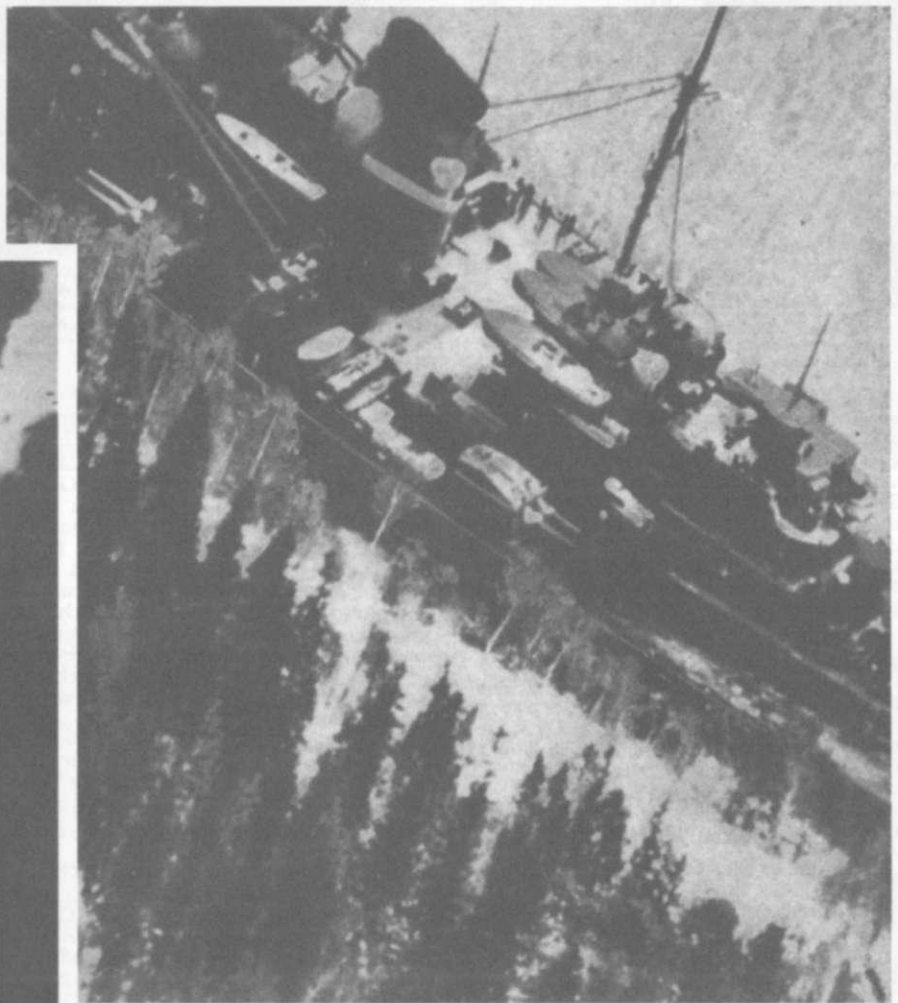


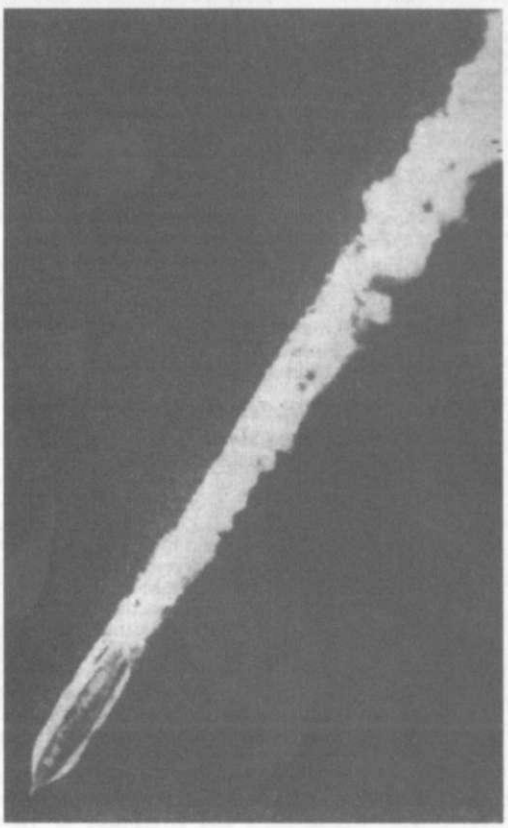
NORTHERN SUPPLY ROUTE to Russia from Britain and America through the Arctic Ocean. The unsuccessful attack by the Germans at the end of March on a large Murmansk-bound convoy led to the first official intimation that America was sending supplies to Russia over this route. Note the railway from Murmansk to Leningrad. *Map, Courtesy of The Daily Express*

What Our Airmen Saw of the Tirpitz



TIRPITZ, Germany's giant battleship, photographed by an R.A.F. reconnaissance plane in Aas Fjord, Norway. From amidships on the starboard side she is protected by an anti-torpedo boom, while floating camouflage lies on both sides of her bow and stern. Heavy white camouflage material covers the barrels of the 15-in. guns.





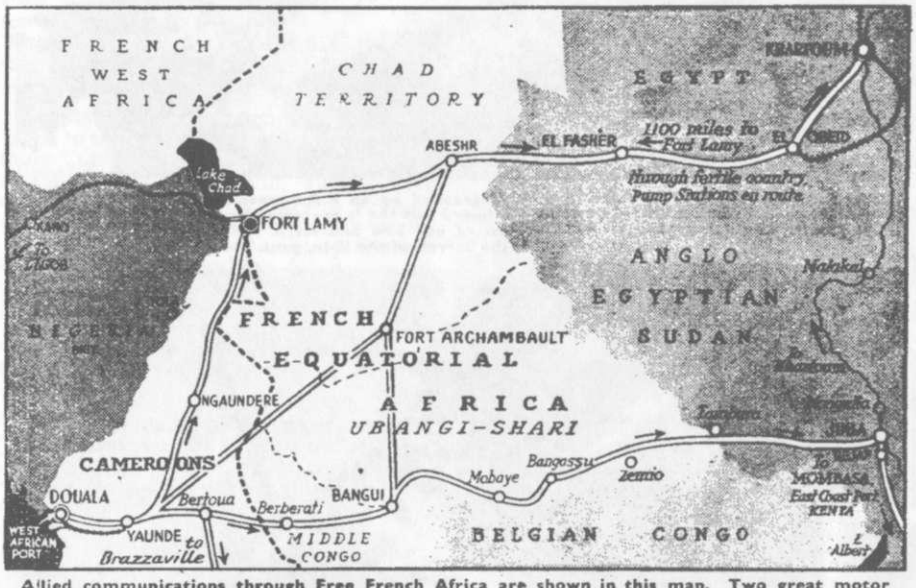
A DARING CLOSE-UP, to take which the airman dived to only 100 feet above the battleship, shows a section of the Tirpitz as she lay in Aas Fjord. Taken from the port side, the photograph shows the central portion aft of the bridge. Left, an R.A.F. photograph of the Tirpitz steaming at speed in Trondheim Fjord. *Photos, British Official*

What Free French Africa Means To Us

Gen. Mangin, who led the victorious offensive of the French 10th Army in the Compiegne sector in June 1918, once said : "He who holds the Chad holds Africa." Some idea of the strategical (and also the economic) importance to the Allies of Free French Africa is given below.

Look at the map of Africa. In the centre of the continent lies a huge block of French territory bounded on the north and south by Libya and the Belgian Congo, on east and west by the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and Nigeria. This great territory, made up of the French Cameroons, Ubangi-Shari, the Chad Territory, Middle Congo and Gabon, has, fortunately for the Allies, rallied to the cause of Free France.

This African group of colonies is of great strategical interest. Its coast line on the South Atlantic, stretching for some 600 miles, has a number of modern ports like Libreville, Port Gentil, Pointe Noire and Douala, the two latter perfectly equipped with jetties and quays in deep water. Moreover, this group of colonies binds together British West Africa and British East Africa, forming a solid block right across the continent from the Atlantic to the Red Sea.



Allied communications through Free French Africa are shown in this map. Two great motor roads now cross Central Africa, one from Lagos or Douala through Fort Lamy to the Sudan, and the other from Douala to Juba and on to the Indian Ocean. *Map, Courtesy of The Sphere*

Through this territory runs an important life-line from Britain and the United States to the Middle East, the vital supply route which goes from Lagos, the British port in Nigeria, across the heart of Africa, to Khartoum, Port Sudan and Massawa. Another important link is the road running from the Free French port of Douala through Bangui to Juba, whence supplies can be diverted through Kenya to Mombasa on the Indian Ocean, or up the Nile to Khartoum.

Situated in the territory are many air bases and modern aerodromes which enable Britain to maintain regular air communication between her colonies of Gambia, Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast and Nigeria on the one side and Egypt, Kenya and the Sudan on the other. Had French Africa been entirely controlled by Vichy, Nigeria would have been isolated and surrounded by hostile or German-controlled neutral territories.

At the time of the Armistice between Pétain and the Axis, military preparedness in the French Cameroons and French Equatorial Africa was almost non-existent. But since then much leeway has been made up. Brazzaville, capital of the Free French Middle Congo, has become the receiving station for vast supplies of material and men for the Free French Empire. Here, in Brazzaville, at the Camp Colonna d'Ornano—the Free French Saint-Cyr—officer cadets receive their training in modern warfare. Here, too, are men who escaped from Dunkirk and Norway, as well as magnificent native troops from the African hinterland. And more Frenchmen are constantly arriving from Great Britain after completing their training in this country. From Brazzaville went the Free French troops who distinguished themselves in Libya, in Eritrea, and in Syria. At Yaundé, in the Cameroons, a new depot has been created for the Foreign Legion.

But of all the Free French territory in Africa, probably none is more important than the Chad, the cross-roads of the continent of Africa. Here roads radiate in all directions, while northwards lie important oases in the heart of the Libyan desert. During the past year much work has been done in constructing new roads and perfecting existing ones in this area. Thousands of natives have been employed on this work ; and today the interior of French Equatorial Africa, for long impenetrable, can be reached from the coast by car and lorry in four or five days.

Defending the Chad territory is a Free French column under the command of General Leclerc. That this young general is by no means a partisan of static defence is shown by the recent series of remarkable raids he has carried out against the Axis outposts in the south of Tripolitania. At the beginning of March his forces captured an enemy advanced post at Fezzan, in the southern Libyan desert, hundreds of miles from the Chad. A few days later the posts of El Uigh, El Chebir, El Gatrun, Tegerhi, Temessa and Tassawa were likewise captured with insignificant losses. Tassawa lies in the heart of Italian Tripolitania, and the capture of this place constituted a grave threat to the right flank of the Italian forces in this area.

These raids were analogous to those carried out the year before by Free French Forces under the late Lt.-Col. Colonna d'Ornano, when the Méharistes, or Camel Corps, made successful attacks on Murzuk and Gatrun. These raids have their significance, for one of the benefits which accrued from the adhesion of the Chad to the Free French cause was that any Italian push into the heart of Africa could be forestalled.

Fort Lamy, which lies just south of Lake Chad, is the strong point of the territory. From it radiate roads to the lake, to Kano, terminus of the railway from Lagos, to Abeche, to Fort Archambault, to Carnot, to Yaundé. Maybe there are more, of which nothing has yet been said. With Fort Lamy in Axis hands the main route across Africa from Atlantic to Red Sea would be lost to the Allies. The importance of this supply route jumps to the eye when one looks at the map of Africa. Stores and supplies of many kinds can be unloaded at Lagos or Douala for dispatch to the Middle East ; supplies which otherwise would have to make the long journey around the Cape with all its attendant hazards of mine and submarine. That the Axis is alive to the importance of Fort Lamy is shown by the fact that it has already been attacked from the air. The nearest Axis air base for use against French Equatorial Africa is at Ghadames, 1,500 miles away.

The economic resources of Free French Africa, too, are by no means negligible. The Cameroons are rich in cocoa, coffee, timber, palm-oil and palm kernels ; then come minerals, such as tin ore, plumbago, wolfram, mica, iron ore and gold, which is extracted in ever-increasing quantities. Some geologists hold that French Equatorial Africa has gold deposits as rich as those of the Transvaal. From the north come cattle and hides ; farther south the cultivation of cotton has started, while Gabon is particularly rich in timber, exporting in normal times some 400,000 tons per annum, almost all of which, before the war, was sent to Germany. The economic development of Free French Africa is now under the direction of M. Adolphe Eboué, Governor-General of Free Equatorial Africa, and former Governor of the Chad. M. Eboué was the first Colonial governor to rally to General de Gaulle. A native of Cayenne, in French Guiana, he held various administrative posts in the Colonial Service and when, in 1936, he was made a Colonial Governor, his was the unique distinction of being the first native functionary to rise to that rank. The present Governor of the Chad is Captain Pierre Olivier Lapie, who distinguished himself in the fighting at Narvik with the Foreign Legion.

The important role already played by the Free French African ports and the even more important part they may play in the future cannot be overstressed. As sea bases for patrolling both the sea routes across the South Atlantic and the Cape route to the Indian Ocean their value can immediately be assessed on glancing at a map.

Finally, it is important to remember that Free French Africa is six times as large as metropolitan France and, with a population of six millions and considerable economic resources, constitutes a valuable asset on the side of the United Nations.

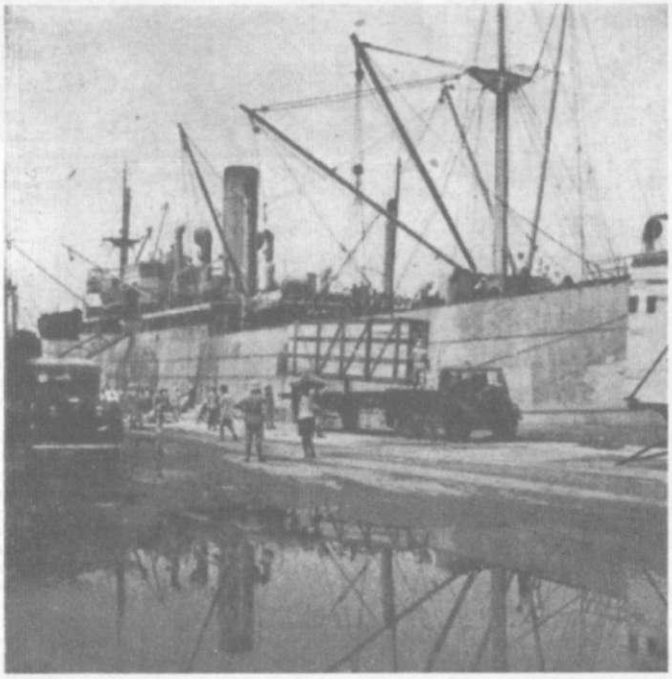
'Recognition' by U.S.A.

To the United States no less than to Britain the maintenance of the vital highways across central Africa is of supreme importance, especially as America is now building up big supply bases in Eritrea. This importance was given official recognition by the State Department at Washington on April 4, when it was announced that a decision had been taken to establish an American Consulate-General at Brazzaville. By so doing the United States has recognized that the French Territories of Equatorial Africa and the Cameroons are under the effective control of the French National Committee in London, with which the American Government is cooperating. The first American Consul-General to Brazzaville will be Mr. Maynard Barnes, formerly First Secretary to the American Embassy in Paris and afterwards in Vichy.

Where Flies the Flag of the Fighting French

Left, men of France's possessions in the Pacific who have rallied to Gen. de Gaulle. They now form part of the Bataillon du Pacifique operating with the Free French Forces in Libya. The U.S.A. has recognized the French National Committee's authority over French possessions in the Pacific as well as in French Equatorial Africa.

Below, war material being transported over the Congo-Ocean railway which links Pointe Noire with Brazzaville. Pointe Noire, like Douala, is a well-equipped port on the Atlantic coast.



Above, stores being unloaded at Douala, the Atlantic seaport of the French Cameroons. From here a road runs through French Africa to the Nile and the Indian Ocean. Douala lies just near the frontier of British Nigeria.

Aircraft on the airfield at Fort Lamy in the Chad territory. They are planes which have taken part in raids on Kufra and the Fezzan region. The enemy has paid tribute to the importance of Fort Lamy by bombing it twice, although it lies a great way from the nearest Axis air base.

Photos, Forces Françaises Libres

Our Searchlight on the War

WOMEN AS FIGHTERS

There are strong men and weak men, and there are strong women and weak women. There is no differentiation between the sexes in the Soviet Union.—*Valentina Grizodubova, Soviet ace woman pilot and squadron leader*

ONCE having admitted the principle of totalitarian war, the recruitment of women for the fighting services is perfectly logical. In Russia there are hundreds of girl fighter pilots, and they are as efficient and brave as the men. Sex-equality has reached the limit in Russia, and presumably those women who want to fight alongside their menfolk have no difficulty in doing so. As a choice between fighting against the Nazis and living under their bestial system we do not doubt that there are many women in this country who would be quite prepared to shoulder arms and defend their homes and children if the need arose. Certain crises in human fate justify the most drastic attitudes. But as a general principle civilization is quite rightly opposed to the idea of the woman soldier. It is not a question of weakness or strength, courage or cowardice. Nature has decreed that woman's responsibility is a creative one. Her function is to give and not to take life, and this, in itself, is her heroic contribution to the scheme of things. Christian chivalry, right down the ages, has regarded woman as the gentler sex, and gentleness also is a virtue. It would be no sign of progress if this tradition were discarded. If there must be wars, it is better that men should do the fighting. A world in which all women were trained to the use of lethal weapons could not claim to be civilized, sex-equality notwithstanding.

POOL VAN being loaded for general delivery in the St. Pancras area. London now has a new pool delivery scheme and people living more than a mile from the stores where they shop will receive deliveries only once a week. *Photo, Topical*

THE ENGLISH HERITAGE

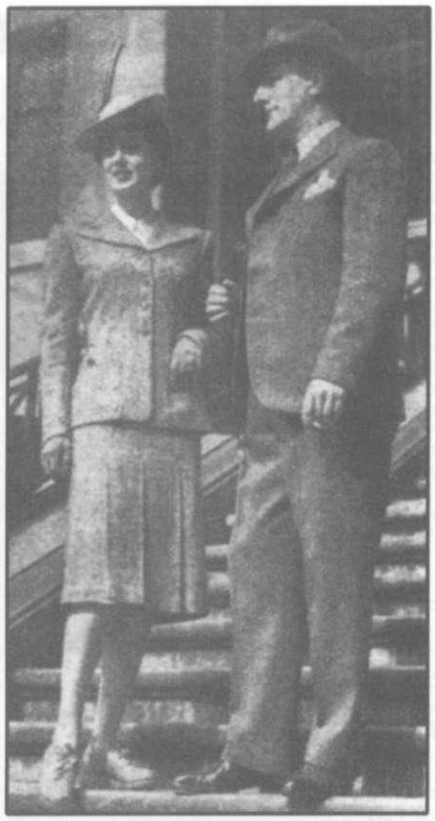
Though nobody says it and everybody talks in the air about Democracy, what we are really fighting for is the English tradition based upon an extremely ancient rural Democracy . . .—*Mr. H. J. Massingham in The Fortnightly Review*

LISTENING to some of our well-meaning reformers, one might imagine that up to 1939 Britain was a land of untutored savages exploited by a few plutocrats and ex-public school boys. Admitting that disgraceful poverty existed, we still had a standard of living much higher than any European country ; and the immense bill for social services was proof of a considerable effort, at least, in humanism. Whatever the shape of things to be, we should not lose sight of the fact that we are fighting, firstly, for spiritual values, for unless these survive no amount of scientific materialism will make Britain happy. Our tradition of freedom implies more than mass-production, high wages and secular pleasures. Communism has become the fashionable panacea, but there can be little doubt that any kind of State despotism is alien to a people whose genius for freedom has developed in progressive continuity for centuries. The need is to restore what is best in our tradition, and surely one of the first things is that yeoman's independence which has nearly been submerged in competitive industrialism. Rationalization of farming which would sweep away the small holdings and merge them in large collective units under state control would tend to destroy the character of the nation. The freedom for which we are fighting also means the freedom of rural communities to preserve certain features of our country life which are wholly and happily English. As Mr. Massingham points out in an excellent article in The Fortnightly Review on the future of farming, "The function of the State is to encourage its nationals to do as far as is humanly possible without it, so that a vigorous and regional self-government is its true purpose, not a bureaucracy using revolutionary powers to paralyse it."

THE CLOSED SHOP

The Ministry of Food and the Board of Trade plan the "telescoping" of businesses which will result in reducing the nation's 750,000 shops to between one-half and a third of this number.

NAPOLEON contemptuously called us a nation of shopkeepers. He learned that we could also win wars. What Hitler calls us doesn't matter. Britain's war with the Nazis, however, is forcing us to close a large number of retail businesses. Time and energy necessary to run these must be diverted to the national business of the war. The man in the street who has often marvelled at the innumerable shops in London and other large cities will also wonder if this emergency measure will have a permanent effect on our highly individualistic trading methods. The "small man" is naturally concerned as to whether this forced closure of his shop will make it difficult for him to resume his trade in peacetime. Shopkeeping, after all, is only one means of livelihood, and the multiplication of marts does imply a waste of time and money in the support of a vast army of middlemen. It remains to be seen whether all this energy in purveying goods from the producer to the consumer could be applied in a more creative sense to the benefit of the nation as a whole. The question ultimately is one of employment and the opportunity to make a living. Could some system be devised whereby the redundant "clerks of commerce" could find an outlet for their talents in more constructive and equally lucrative channels they might be happier in such work. The future of shops, like the future of other things, is still obscure.

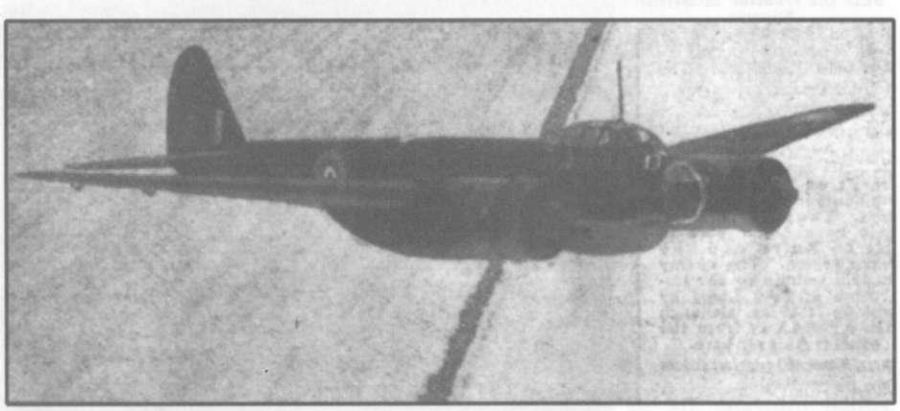


UTILITY WEAR. Left, a Brenner Sports model in brown and natural diagonal weave tweed. Right, one of the men's Utility tweed suits. *Photo, Wide World*

HITLER AND FRANCE

The Nazis, after nearly two years of alternate cajolery and brutality, have completely failed to impose their New Order on France.

HITLER has found it impossible to "digest" France. Having "destroyed" her, as he promised to do in Mein Kampf, he expected her to collaborate in his plans for enslaving Europe. German psychology is so stupid that it is quite mystified because Hitler's victims will not shake hands with their oppressors. The Riom trials, which were staged to prove that France and not Germany was responsible for the war, have been a great disappointment to the Nazi hierarchy. To occupy the whole of France with Gauleiters and troops at a time when, thanks to Russia, Hitler's manpower is waning, and British and American strength is increasing, will tend to weaken the Nazi war effort. Germany is well aware that the spirit of France must rise in proportion to the Allied victories when the tide turns against the Nazi tyranny. The appointment of Laval or any other French traitor to be Statthalter of France must only further consolidate French patriotism. There is but one solution for the horrible mess that the Germans have made of Europe, and that is to retreat within their own frontiers. Though they cannot be expected to do this of their own free will the time is coming when they will be forced to do it.

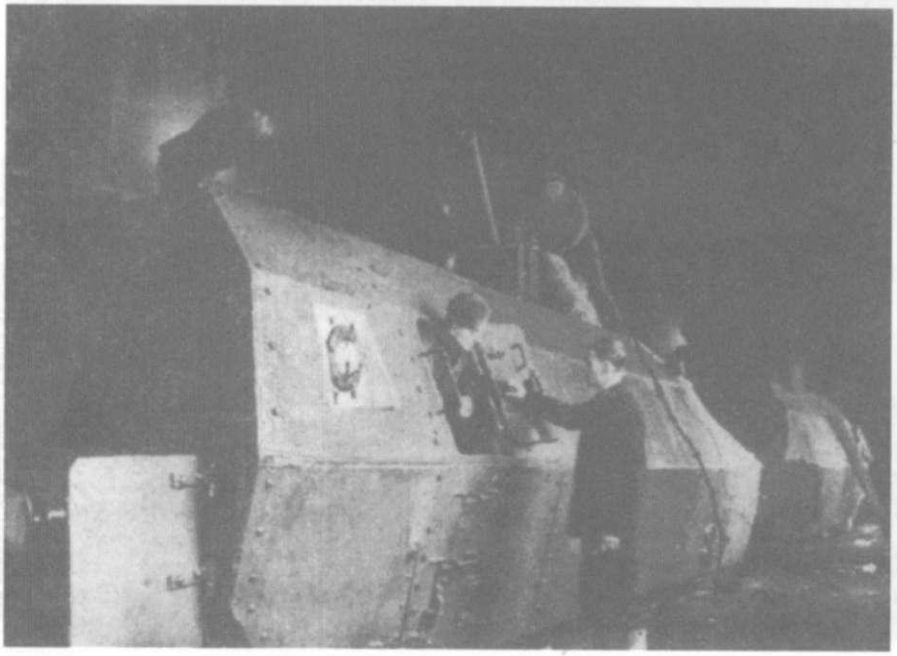


UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT, this captured Junkers 88, now bearing British markings, is serving as an R.A.F. instructional aircraft. Several enemy aircraft, captured and reserviced, are now being used for instructional purposes. *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*

Soviet War Workers Beat Every Record

Russians of all classes are generous donors of blood for the wounded. Left, packing blood for transport to the front at a blood transfusion institute. Above, Russian munition workers riveting anti-tank grenades.

Above, sub-machine-guns in the making at a Soviet factory. In the background are war slogans. Below, workers in a Soviet railway depot finishing the armoured train they built and presented to the Red Army on its 24th anniversary.



In the shell-making shop of one of Leningrad's many plants where Soviet workers are striving to maintain an ever-increasing output.

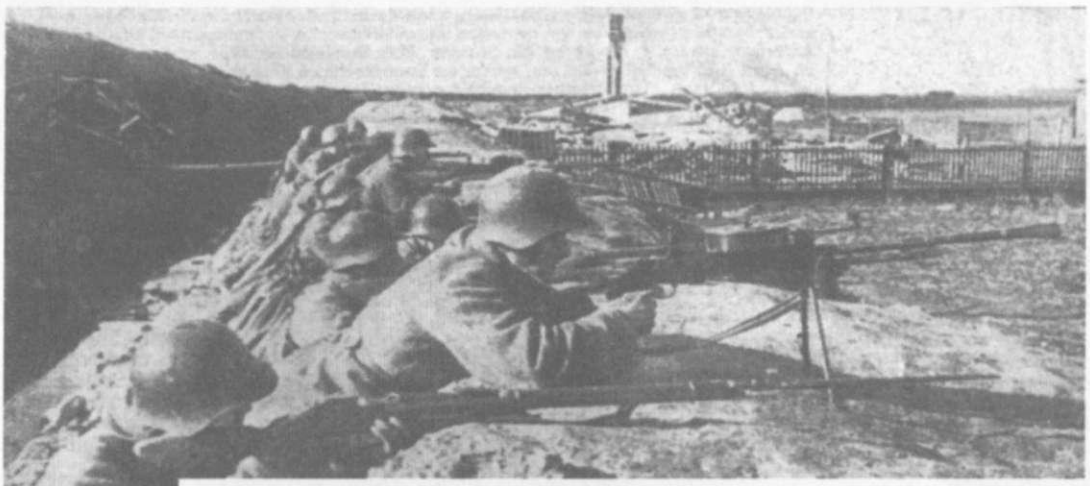
Photos, Ministry of Information, Planet News

RUSSIAN WAR TROPHIES, including these aircraft of the Luftwaffe brought down in Russia, are being shown to the Soviet people at an exhibition in the Gorky Central Park of Culture and Rest, Moscow. This tangible evidence of the success of their armies against Hitler's mighty, but not invincible, military machine, has had a heartening effect upon the inhabitants of Russia's capital, who not so long ago could hear the thunder of the enemy's guns at their very gates.

Photo, Planet News

Russia Will Smash Hitler's War Machine

RED ARMY men in action (right). Centre, photograph radioed from Moscow to London, showing Russian sappers, in snow camouflage, cutting a passage through enemy barbed wire. Shells from a German battery are bursting in the rear. Bottom, a heavy Russian tank ramming a German tank during a Red Army advance.
Photos, Planet News, Keystone



GERMANY ON THE DOWN GRADE

PRESIDENT KALININ of the U.S.S.R. has summed up, in an article in the Russian newspaper Izvestia, the last nine months of the war between Germany and the U.S.S.R. Here are some of his remarks :

At present German aviation does not dominate the air. The Germans are still able to hurl considerable numbers of planes against one sector or another. They are compelled to do this to protect their units from our attacks. This is forced on them by our command, and results in enormous losses. Our tank forces are also gradually approaching the Germans' in quantity, in two ways—we are destroying German tanks in large numbers, and our own tanks are increasing in numbers. In quality they are greatly superior to those of the Fascists.

The German Command has made innumerable failures. It is sufficient to recall that it failed to prepare in time enough winter clothing for its army. Another of the weaknesses of Germany, weaknesses which predetermined its inevitable defeat, is the inability to organize productive work in the conquered countries and those which are "in alliance."

The spring brings new difficulties for the German Army. Before the occupation troops could feed themselves on plunder ; now there is nothing left.

All these things provide ground for the conclusion that the fighting capacity of the German troops has declined. The Fascist Army has passed its zenith and is now on the down grade. It depends on our strength and the valour of the Red Army how much time elapses before the final collapse of Hitler's war machine.

We have sufficient strength for this task, and even more than we sometimes believe.

At Bataan They Fought to the Last Cartridge

"A long and gallant defence has been worn down and overthrown. We have nothing but praise and admiration for the commanders and men who have conducted this epic chapter in American history." So spake Mr. Stimson, U.S. Secretary for War, when giving out the news on April 9 of the fall of Bataan, where for four months a gallant little force of Americans and Filipinos had held a great Japanese army at bay.

At 10.30 on the morning of April 9 the American War Department issued this announcement: "A message from General Wainwright at Fort Mills (on Corregidor Island in Manila Bay), just received by the War Department, states that the Japanese attack on the Bataan Peninsula succeeded in enveloping the east flank of our lines in the position held by the II Corps. An attack by the I Corps, ordered to relieve the situation, failed, due to the complete physical exhaustion of the troops. Full details are not available, but this situation indicated the probability that the defences on Bataan have been overcome."

At a press conference later in the day Mr. Stimson revealed that, the day before, President Roosevelt had sent a message to General Wainwright expressing full appreciation of the enormous difficulties confronting him, and telling him he had nothing but praise for his method of conducting the defence and for his soldierly conduct throughout. Furthermore, any decision that the General reached now would be in the interests of the country and his splendid troops.

The U.S. War Minister went on to say that the day before, General Wainwright had reported that he had 36,853 effectives at his command on the Bataan Peninsula, not including the wounded, some 20,000 civilians, and 6,000 Filipino labourers. The greater part of the armed forces were Filipinos. The Americans were made up largely of the 31st Infantry Regiment, the crews of two tank battalions and units of self-propelled artillery, together with Air Force ground crews, and sailors and marines from the abandoned Cavite naval base. Air Force personnel numbered about 5,000 men at the start of the invasion, and of these some 2,000 fought as infantrymen in the later stages, after their aircraft had been put out of action or transferred, as had been a number of long-range bombers, to the Netherlands East Indies and Australia. (American air losses were very heavy on the first day of the invasion, revealed Mr. Stimson; and Robert Waithman, News Chronicle correspondent in New York, gave the unofficial estimate that on December 8 most of the between 500 and 600 planes which the Americans had on Luzon island were destroyed by Japanese bombs.)

BATAAN Peninsula, showing the line between Subic Bay and Manila Bay held by the American and Filipino troops for four months against superior forces. The island fortress of Corregidor, which still held out, lies five miles off the southern tip of Bataan.

Courtesy of The Daily Telegraph

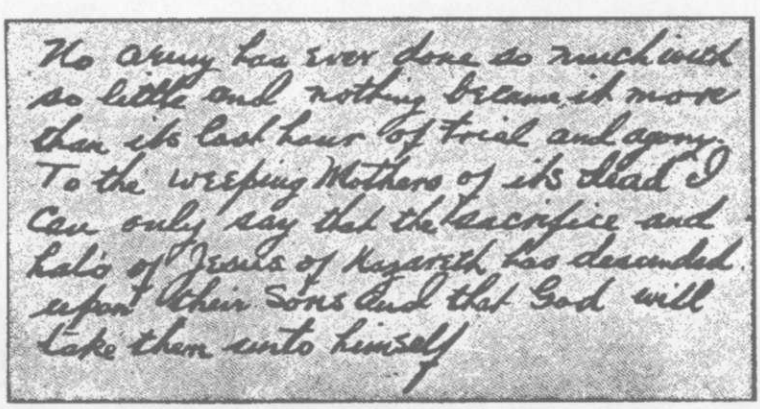
Igorots Ride the Tanks

As mentioned above, the greater part of the defenders of Bataan were natives of the Philippines, who proved themselves to be of the finest fighting quality. As an instance, take General MacArthur's story of an action in February.

A company of Igorot tribesmen had "died to a man in their foxholes without flinching or thought of retreat." Their comrades sought to avenge them; and when the General ordered a counter-attack, the Igorots climbed on top of the American tanks and guided them through the dense bamboo jungle. The little force closed in on the enemy. "Bataan," reported General MacArthur in his dispatch, "has seen many wild mornings, but nothing to equal this. Always above the din of battle rose the fierce shouts of the Igorots as they rode the tanks and fired their pistols. No guns, no thicket, only death itself could stop that mad rush. Of all the bloody spots on the peninsula, that proved to be the bloodiest. When the attack was over the remnants of the tanks and of the Igorots were still there, but the 20th Japanese Infantry Regiment was completely annihilated. Many desperate acts of heroism have fallen under my observation in many fields of battle in many parts of the world. But for sheer breath-taking and heart-stopping desperation I have never known the equal of those Igorots riding the tanks."

The American and Filipino troops in Luzon had had their food rationed since January 11, the day after General MacArthur took up his position in Bataan. Immediately following, attempts were made under the direction of Brig.-General Hurley to send supplies into the Philippines from an American base in Australia. General Hurley did manage to get several shiploads of supplies into the Philippines and part reached Corregidor and Bataan.

For every ship that arrived he lost nearly two ships, however. All the same, said Mr. Stimson, the defenders were never short of ammunition. "Our troops," he said, "outnumbered and worn down by successive attacks by fresh troops, exhausted by insufficient rations and disease prevalent in that peninsula, finally had their lines broken and enveloped by the enemy."


No army has ever done so much with so little and nothing became it more than its last hour of trial and agony. To the weeping Mothers of its Dead I can only say that the sacrifice and Pietà of Jesus of Nazareth has descended upon their Sons and that God will take them unto himself

This photograph, radioed from Australia, is of General MacArthur's personal tribute to his old comrades, the gallant defenders of Bataan, who, after a resistance of four months which made history were overwhelmed by the vastly superior weight of enemy forces. *Photo, Planet News*

From the Japanese news agency came an account of the last phase of the battle for Bataan. The final assault was launched on April 3, and for nearly a week General Yamashita strove to drive the defenders from their positions. After taking Limay on the east coast of the peninsula, the Japanese vanguard drove into Lamao, forcing the American and Filipino troops to fall back in the direction of Mariveles on the peninsula's southern tip. After heavy Japanese dive-bombing several thousands of the defenders surrendered in the Limay and Lamao region (so it was claimed), among them being the Commanders of the 21st Division and the 22nd Infantry Regiment.

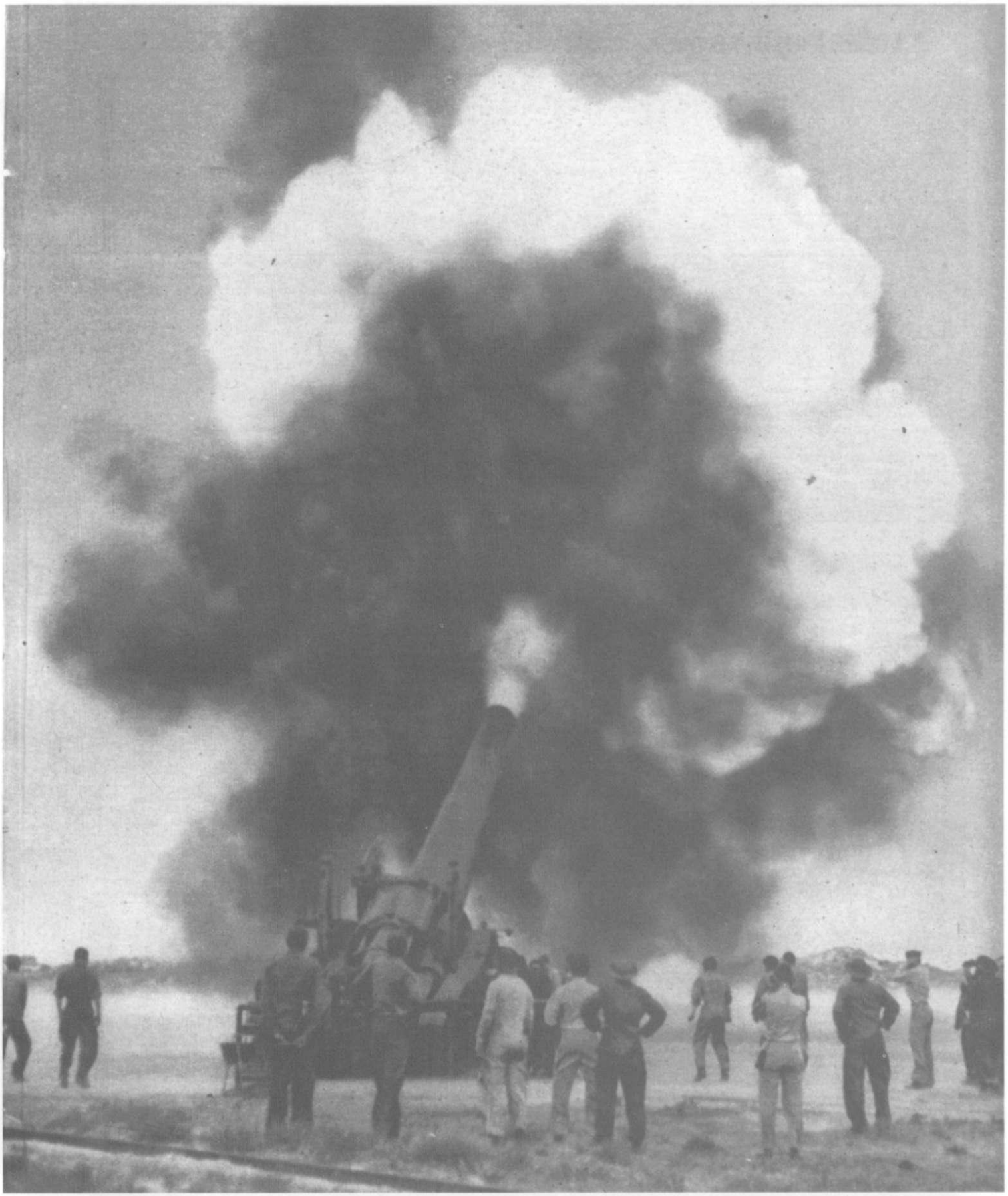
Last Hours on the Peninsula

The ferocity of the attack may be gauged from a statement by a Japanese staff officer, who is quoted as saying that several hundred guns were trained on each square mile of the front, which was 12½ miles wide and 19 miles deep. On the first day of the operations—on April 3, that is—there was a six-hour barrage; this ceased at 3 in the afternoon when the Japanese infantry occupied the American advanced lines. Then artillery and infantry attacked alternately in the following days until American and Filipino resistance was exhausted. Throughout, the Japanese, thanks to their complete air superiority, were using fresh troops; altogether, it was estimated they had available some 100,000 men.

By April 8 the end was in sight, and from Corregidor came a message telling how throughout the night nurses dazed with fatigue and war-weary troops and civilians had been making the passage across the narrow channel separating the Bataan peninsula from Corregidor.

"They have braved Japanese bombers and the shark-infested seas in a bid for refuge from the clutches of the Japanese, who have overrun the peninsula. Some have come in rowing-boats, but most of them swam and were picked up in mid-channel by other small craft. And as they made the perilous trip the Japanese bombed and viciously machine-gunned them. Some of the soldiers had gone many nights without sleep, or had had little to eat during the final days of the battle against overwhelming odds. The only thing they wanted was sleep. Some of the nurses, who came in small boats, stumbled as they set foot ashore from weariness after long days of work under constant fire. Meanwhile, from this island fortress we could hear tremendous explosions, and see fires as the scorched earth policy was being carried out. Soldiers, veterans of many bombing attacks, wept openly as they heard the San Francisco short-wave station broadcast the news, 'Bataan has fallen'."

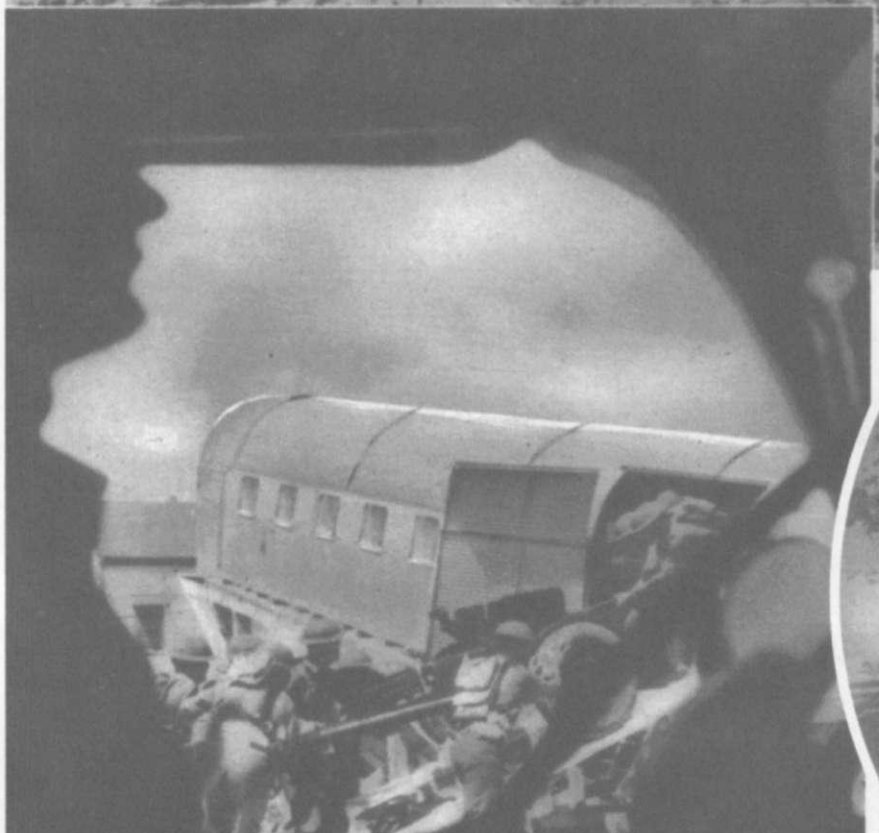
Fighting on the peninsula ceased on April 9. In a message from Corregidor, which was now once again furiously bombed and shelled, to President Roosevelt, General Wainwright said that everything possible had been done to hold Bataan with the limited number of troops under his command. But "the overwhelming air and artillery superiority of the Japanese finally overcame the dogged resistance of the hungry and exhausted defenders." A few days later he sent a "no surrender" message. "Bataan has fallen, but Corregidor will carry on. On this mighty fortress the spirit of Bataan will continue to live."



Photo, Wide World

America Thunders Defiance

In the workshops, the factories and the steel mills of the United States of America the weapons of war are being forged, not only for the great republic herself, but for all those who stand beside her in defence of Democracy. An enormous 16-in. gun, similar to those defending Corregidor, is here being tested at Fort Tilden, military camp on Long Island, N.Y.



Soldiers of Uncle Sam

Photos, Planet News, Wide World

The U.S.A. is raising, and equipping, great armies to fight in any corner of the globe. The U.S. Army uniforms shown top, are, left to right: snowshoe trooper; summer or tropical field; winter field; armoured forces; ski trooper; paratrooper; summer mounted. Above, training with light assault boats. Ten of these boats nest inside each other on a single truck.

Malta: So Small in Size, So Great in Spirit

In assuming the Colonelcy-in-Chief of the Royal Malta Artillery, which most ably supports the R.A.F. in the active defence of the island, the King, in a special message to Lt.-Gen. Dobbie, said: "I have been watching with admiration the stout-hearted resistance of all in Malta—service personnel and civilians alike—to the fierce and constant air attacks of the enemy in recent weeks."

JUST a red dot on the blue expanse of the Mediterranean—that is the map's picture of Malta. But in history Malta, although it is smaller than the Isle of Wight, has a place surpassing in greatness and grandeur that of many a state larger far in territory but not to be compared with it in the heroism of its people, the valour of its defenders, its importance in the strategy of a world-wide conflict.

Since that summer day in 1940 when the mouthing megalomaniac, Mussolini, appeared on the balcony of the Palazzo Venezia and bellowed forth to the crowd of frenzied Fascists massed in the square below him the news that Italy had gone to war—since that day, not yet two years ago, Malta has borne the full brunt of an almost continuous air assault. More than 1,500 air-raid alarms have been sounded in the island, sometimes as many as eight in one day. In these circumstances life on the little island is eventful enough; it is both tough and dangerous. As the morning sun comes up from the eastern sea the sirens may churn out their first warning of the day. There is no panic, since the Maltese have seen more aerial combats than any other people in the British Empire. Rarely do they miss a dogfight, and they cheer themselves hoarse as a plume of black and white smoke streaking across the azure sky speaks of the doom of yet another German or Italian pilot.

For the most part the men continue with their work until the shell splinters become too numerous or the bombs fall too close to be comfortable. Then, for a brief space, they join their womenfolk—the mothers who have gathered their children like chickens under the maternal wing—and make quietly and unhurriedly for the safety of the rock shelters.

Fortunate indeed is it for the islanders that Nature has provided them with so solid a foundation. Beneath their feet some 6,000 air-raid shelters have been tunnelled out of the solid rock, and another 1,500 are in course of construction. Most of them are over 100 feet down, and in some there is accommodation for as many as 1,500 people, with a bunk provided for each. Nearly every shelter is equipped with electric light and wireless, with washing and cooking facilities; and some of them have small altars erected in a quiet corner, where regular evening services are held and where solitary prayers may be, and are, offered to our Lady of Victories.

Although the Axis spokesmen claim that Malta must soon be starved into submission, the food situation is, in fact, remarkably good, considering the dangers and difficulties that attend the island's provisioning. There are two meatless days a week; but fish is always available, and there is plenty to eat for all. Soup kitchens have been organized, and there those islanders who have lost their homes through enemy action are able to obtain a substantial meal for a few pence. The Government provides warm clothing for those who have lost their all, and makes grants of money in necessitous cases. The local milk-marketing board makes a point of seeing that every child has its supply of fresh milk daily.

The inspiration of the island's magnificent defence—and not only of its defence but of the offensive spirit which actuates its defenders on land, sea and in the air—is the sixty-year-old General Dobbie. "England doesn't seem to realize the magnificent job he is doing," a man just back from Malta told The Star the other day, "holding that tiny fortress on the enemy's doorstep. Think of it! Only 70 miles from Sicily, where the Luftwaffe are concentrated; as open to attack as are our South Coast towns from the Nazi bases on the Continent, yet worse off than we are because there can be no retreat to other aerodromes far inland."

Gen. Dobbie is in very truth a Christian warrior, a soldier in the evangelical tradition of Cromwell and his Ironsides, of Capt. Hedley Vickars, who "walked with God before Sebastopol" in the Crimea, of "Chinese" Gordon who found in his Bible the inspiration which nerved him to meet with sublime contempt the Mahdi's spearmen. To quote from The Star again, "Dobbie still lives 'with a Bible in one hand and a sword in the other.' He still holds his Bible classes in his home just as he did at Chatham and later in Malaya. He is still a teetotaler. Even in the hottest attack—and believe me, the Luftwaffe know how to drop bombs on Malta—Dobbie will go out imperturbable, regardless of self, thoughtful of others. I have seen him helping to rescue people from their wrecked homes and urging on the civil as well as the military defence. And it is largely because of his personality that the Maltese have come to respect and like the British."

Foremost in the defence of the island is the Royal Air Force, and well do Air Vice-Marshal Lloyd and his squadrons deserve the congratulations which were sent them by Sir Archibald Sinclair last autumn. "The brilliant defence of the island by the Hurricanes (wired the Air Minister), the audacious attacks of the Beaufighters on enemy air bases, the steady and deadly slogging of the Wellingtons at the enemy airports, the daring and the dextrous reconnaissances of the Marylands, culminating in the tremendous onslaughts of the Blenheims and Fleet Air Arm Swordfish on Axis shipping in the Mediterranean, are watched with immense admiration by your comrades in the R.A.F. and by your fellow-men at home."

But the Royal Navy, too, is playing a magnificent part in Malta's defence—and offence; and when we remember the much more than century-old association of the island with his Majesty's ships it is not surprising that the Navy holds a unique place in the affections of the islanders. Not so many ships put in at Valetta as in the days of peace; but ships still call, and, large or small, they are sure of a tremendous reception. One such occasion was on December 13 last, when three British destroyers, followed by another of the Dutch Navy, entered the harbour after a triumphant clash in which they had sent to the bottom two of Mussolini's cruisers with one of his destroyers and an E-boat. Then the age-old bastions overlooking the harbour, the cobbled wharves and the long waterfronts are crowded with a cheering population, ships are manned, and military bands on the quayside play "Rule, Britannia," and "Roll out the Barrel."

Recently Air Vice-Marshal Lloyd spoke of the difficulties which have to be faced in the island's offensive-defence. Looking for the enemy is very difficult, he said, since the area of sea is enormous. "We patrol the seas to the east and to the west every day and all day. To the east it is over 350 miles to Greece. When we arrive there we have to cover something like 500 miles of Greek coast and open sea from Italy to Africa. To the west we have 200 miles to the Tunisian coast, and in the south 200 to Tripolitania." Well might he describe it as a tremendous undertaking, one which imposes a terrific strain on the young and courageous pilots. All the same, "We in Malta dominate this part of the Mediterranean. We strike the enemy wherever it hurts him most. And it hurts him grievously."

Then, in conclusion, Air Vice-Marshal Lloyd said that Malta was on the eve of great events, in which she would play a part greater even than heretofore in the enemy's defeat. "Malta has every reason to be proud of the past; she has every reason to be proud of her part in this war, and the full story of that has yet to be told. When it is told, it will amaze many people. The best, however, is yet to come. God speed that day!"

'WHY WE HAVE NOT TAKEN MALTA'

MANY people in Germany ask: "How can Malta still carry on after all these attacks? It should be knocked to pieces by now." These people look at the map and see a tiny island, like a pin's point. They overlook that, after two years of war, Malta is one great fortress. It is armed to the teeth. The A.A. guns are tremendously strong. The other defences are standing up to the heaviest test. Ammunition dumps and fuel stores are hidden in deep caverns of the rock—invulnerable from the air for all practical purposes. *From the sea Malta is practically invulnerable.* You will remember that Italian M.T.B.s tried to penetrate the Malta defences and to enter the harbour of Valetta. Not one of these courageous naval units returned. To fight Malta we have to attack from the air and cut off her sea communications. But you cannot expect the Luftwaffe to sink the island with bombs.—*Gen. Quaade, Luftwaffe spokesman, April, 1942.*

MALTA'S DEFENDERS. Left, Maj.-Gen. D. M. W. Beak, V.C., D.S.O., M.C., commanding the troops in Malta. Centre, Air Vice-Marshal H. P. Lloyd, Air Officer Commanding R. A. F., Malta. Right, Sir E. St. John Jackson, Lieut.-Governor of Malta. Photos of the Governor, Lt.-Gen. Sir W. Dobbie, and Vice-Adm. Sir R. Leatham, Flag Officer in Charge, are in pages 513 and 610.

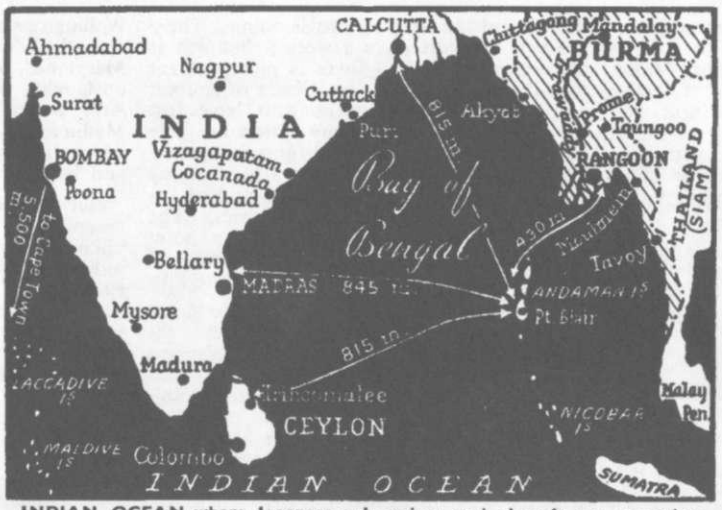
Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright, Vandyk, Keystone

Ever Nearer to India Stride the Japanese

Day by day the Japanese are getting nearer to India, now revealed as their principal objective in the Far Eastern war zone. Below we describe a number of clashes on land, sea and in the air, in which the enemy still on balance had the advantage.

TOWARDS the end of March, or early in April, the Japanese High Command sent a numerous and powerful fleet into the Indian Ocean. On April 4 it was observed steering towards Ceylon, and (said Mr. Churchill in the House of Commons on April 13) it comprised at least three battleships, including one modernized 16-in.-gun Nagato type, and five aircraft-carriers, together with a number of heavy and light cruisers and destroyer flotillas.

Very soon this great force made its presence felt. First, from the aircraft-carriers sped a host of bombing planes to raid ports in Ceylon and on the Madras coast. Colombo was the first target. Maybe the Japanese were hoping to repeat their success at Pearl Harbour in the opening hours of the war; if so, they were disappointed. The defences were ready, and out of 75 raiders, 25 were shot down by our fighters and two, engaged in a low-flying attack, by anti-aircraft fire; five more were probably shot down and another 25 damaged. Although the harbour and the suburb of Ratmalana were dive-bombed and machine-gunned, the damage caused was reported to be slight and the casualties few. Over half the people killed were patients in a medical establishment.



INDIAN OCEAN where Japanese submarines and aircraft are operating against Allied shipping and men-of-war. From aircraft-carriers, probably based on the Andamans, they have launched air attacks on Colombo and Trincomalee.
Courtesy of The Daily Mirror

This attack on Colombo was made on Easter Sunday, April 5. The next day the first bombs fell on the Indian mainland, when the harbour at Vizagapatam and the town of Cocanada were raided by a small number of Japanese aircraft. Then on April 9 a large force of enemy bombers and fighters carried out an attack on Trincomalee, the British naval base in Ceylon. Some damage was caused to the harbour and aerodrome buildings, and there were a few casualties amongst the dockyards naval and civil personnel. But 21 of the raiders were destroyed for certain, 12 were probably destroyed, and two more damaged.

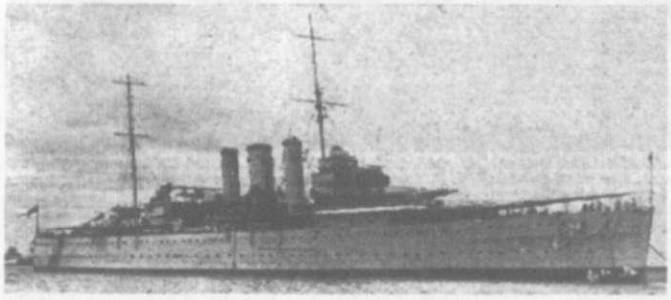
Following these attacks British torpedo aircraft sallied out to attack the carriers from which the Japanese planes had been launched. On the day of the Colombo attack there were thunderstorms and low cloud, so that they were unable to make contact with the enemy. After the Trincomalee raid, however, it was reported that contact had been established, and a near miss on one aircraft-carrier was claimed. "But whether any damage was done I have no knowledge," said Mr. Churchill on April 13; "I know this, however, that practically all our aircraft taking part in the attack were shot down or seriously injured or became unserviceable."

Then on Easter Monday, April 6, a British convoy was intercepted off the coast of Orissa by two Japanese heavy cruisers and a destroyer. Forming a triangle, the enemy ships opened a barrage of gunfire, which lasted about half an hour. Several merchant ships were sunk, but between four hundred and five hundred survivors reached the Orissa coast in their lifeboats. Three days later the Japanese claimed to have sunk 20 merchantmen and damaged 23 others in the Indian Ocean up to April 7. Moreover, in the same communiqué they declared that they had sunk two British cruisers, and the next day they added to their list of victims an aircraft-carrier.

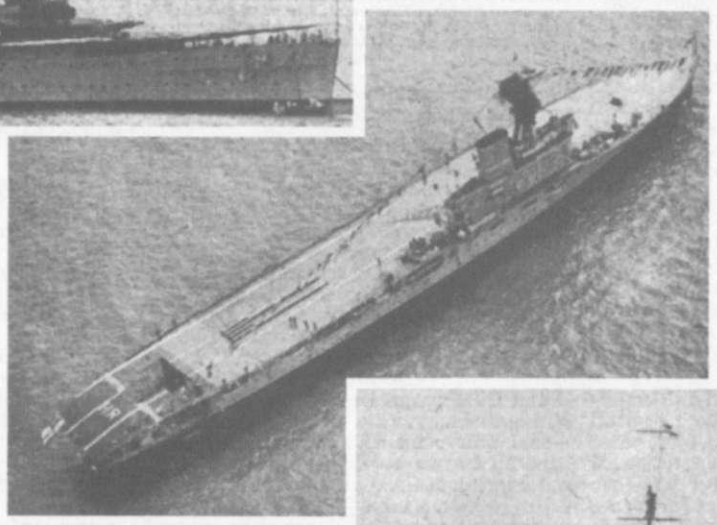
These naval losses inflicted by enemy aircraft were admitted by the Admiralty within a few hours: the cruisers H.M.S. Dorsetshire (Capt. A. W. S. Agar, V.C., D.S.O., R.N.) and H.M.S. Cornwall (Capt. P. C. W. Manwaring, R.N.) and the old aircraft-carrier H.M.S. Hermes (Capt. R. F. J. Onslow, M.V.O., D.S.O., R.N.). More than eleven hundred survivors, including the two commanding officers, were rescued from the cruisers; and a large proportion of the ship's company of H.M.S. Hermes reached land, since at the time she was sunk she was only about ten miles off the eastern coast of Ceylon.

Mr. Churchill had little to add to the communiqués when he made a statement on the sinkings; he did disclose, however, that the British fleet in the Bay of Bengal was under the command of Admiral Sir James Somerville, "an officer who for the last two years has been commanding in the western Mediterranean and has almost unrivalled experience of the conditions of modern war."

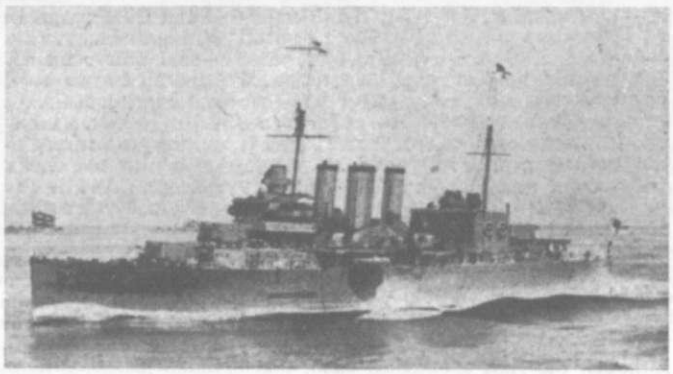
While the Japanese were scoring these successes at sea, their armies were pushing steadily ahead through the valleys and jungles of Burma. General Alexander's little army and the Chinese army under the American General Stilwell fought valiantly, but they were compelled to fall back up the valleys of the Irrawaddy and the Sittang. The Japanese overcame the desperate Chinese resistance in Toungoo on April 1, and to the west the British were compelled to evacuate Prome on April 3. The same day Mandalay was savagely bombed. Two days later the heavy bombers of the American Volunteer Group struck back at the Japanese in Rangoon, but their effort was small and weak compared with the enemy's punch. For still it was the old, old story. In the sky of Burma, as in the skies of so many other places where the United Nations have warred against the Axis, air superiority was the enemy's strongest card.



H.M.S. DORSETSHIRE, 9,975-ton cruiser, sunk in the Indian Ocean by Jap air attack.



H.M. aircraft-carrier HERMES, sunk off Ceylon by Japanese bombs. She was completed in 1924.



H.M.S. CORNWALL, 10,000-ton cruiser of the Kent class, sunk by Japanese air attack in the Indian Ocean.
Photos, Central Press, Associated Press

With Uncle Sam's Men on the Emerald Isle

'YANKS' IN IRELAND are rapidly settling down in their new environment, and training exercises and manoeuvres are now in full swing. These photographs show : top, a "jeep," or "blitz buggy," as the Americans term their small scout cars, towing an anti-tank gun during exercises along the coast of Northern Ireland. Centre, American snipers busy among the rocks. Above, the first shooting practice of American gun teams using British artillery in Northern Ireland.

Photos, Fox, Associated Press

Our Diary of the War

APRIL 1, 1942, Wednesday *942nd day*

Air.—R.A.F. made night attack on Matford motor-works at Poissy, near Paris, as well as on other targets in N. France, Belgium and Germany. Boulogne docks bombed by day.

Mediterranean.—In more mass raids on Malta 17 enemy aircraft destroyed and many damaged.

Burma.—Chinese withdrew N.E. of Toungoo. Battle for Prome developing.

Australasia.—R.A.A.F. made another heavy raid on Koepang, in Dutch Timor.

General.—Washington announced 28 Axis submarines destroyed to date by U.S. Forces. First meeting of Pacific War Council held at White House, Washington. Call-up of all Australian single men between 18 and 45 and married men between 18 and 35.

APRIL 2, Thursday *943rd day*

Air.—R.A.F. attacked Matford works at Poissy by night, also docks at Le Havre.

Russian Front.—Soviet forces made considerable advance S.E. of Kharkov.

Home.—Night raids on South coast.

APRIL 3, Friday *944th day*

Sea.—Admiralty announced loss of H.M. destroyer Heythrop.

Mediterranean.—Heavy raids on Malta. During March 59 enemy aircraft were destroyed over Malta, 23 probably destroyed and 94 damaged.

Burma.—British forces withdrew from Prome to positions north of the town. Mandalay heavily bombed.

India.—Flying Fortresses of U.S. Air Forces in India attacked Japanese shipping in the Andaman Islands.

Australasia.—R.A.A.F. made another heavy raid on Koepang. Port Darwin raided : five of the raiders destroyed.

APRIL 4, Saturday *945th day*

Air.—Sweep by R.A.F. over N. France. Railways near St. Omer attacked.

Russian Front.—Moscow announced more successes on the Leningrad front and the sinking of two enemy transports in the Barents Sea.

Burma.—Japanese thrusting towards Burma oilfields at Yenangyaung.

Australasia.—R.A.A.F. attacked enemy aerodromes at Lae in New Guinea and Koepang in Dutch Timor. Many Japanese aircraft destroyed over Port Darwin.

General.—U.S. State Dept. announced that the U.S.A. recognized the authority of the Free French throughout French Equatorial Africa and the Cameroons. Repatriation of some sick and wounded British and Italian prisoners began following an Anglo-Italian agreement for the exchange. U.S. Navy Dept. announced that U.S. submarines had sunk at least one and probably two Japanese light cruisers near Christmas Island. Jap ships sunk or damaged by U.S. Navy to date totalled 132—56 warships and 76 non-combatant vessels.

APRIL 5, Sunday *946th day*

Air.—Gnome-Rhone aero-engine works at Gennevilliers raided at night by Whitley bombers. Other aircraft of Bomber Command raided objectives in Germany, including Cologne, and the docks at Le Havre.

Mediterranean.—Day and night air battles over Malta.

India.—Japanese aircraft raided Colombo, British naval base in Ceylon. Of 75 raiders, 27 were shot down. Five more were probably destroyed and 25 others damaged.

Burma.—American heavy bombers attacked docks at Rangoon.

Philippines.—Heavy Japanese attack on the Bataan Peninsula repulsed.

Home.—Enemy bomber destroyed off E. Coast.

APRIL 6, Monday *947th day*

Air.—Night attack by R.A.F. on Ruhr and Rhineland.

Mediterranean.—More mass raids on Malta.

India.—Harbours at Vizagapatam and Cocanada, in the province of Madras, bombed by Japanese aircraft.

Philippines.—Japanese made some gains on Bataan Peninsula at a heavy cost.

Australasia.—R.A.A.F. attacked Rabaul and Gasmata, in New Britain, and Koepang in Dutch Timor.

Home.—Bombs dropped on S. Coast. H.Q. of the first Canadian Army, under command of Lt.-Gen. A. G. L. McNaughton, established in the U. Kingdom.

General.—U.S. Navy Dept. announced sinking of three more Japanese ships by U.S. submarines.

APRIL 7, Tuesday *948th day*

Sea.—Admiralty announced loss of H.M. destroyer Havock off the Tunisian coast, and submarine Tempest.

Mediterranean.—Another fierce raid on Malta. At least nine raiders destroyed.

Burma.—British destroyed oil and cement installations in retirement north of Prome.

Philippines.—Heavy casualties on both sides in the Bataan Peninsula.

Australasia.—R.A.A.F. attack on Lae, in New Guinea.

General.—Reported from Norway that all Norwegian clergymen had resigned en masse.

APRIL 8, Wednesday *949th day*

Air.—R.A.F. made big offensive sweep over N. France. Night attack on N.W. Germany and docks at Le Havre.

Russian Front.—Rumanian 18th Division reported shattered in big battle on the Ukraine front.

Mediterranean.—Air blitz on Malta continued. Nine enemy aircraft destroyed and many damaged.

Africa.—Cairo communiqué reported increased activity in the forward area by Rommel's troops.

Burma.—Imperial forces reported holding positions north of Thayetmyo, Irrawaddy river port.

Philippines.—Huge Japanese forces attacking American-Filipino troops on Bataan Peninsula.

Australasia.—Japanese seizure of Lorengau, in the Admiralty Islands, reported.

General.—Gen. Marshall, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, arrived in London. Ali Pasha Maher, former prime minister, arrested by Egyptian Government.

APRIL 9, Thursday *950th day*

Sea.—Admiralty announced sinking of British cruisers Dorsetshire and Cornwall by Japanese aircraft in Indian Ocean, and that an Italian 10,000-ton cruiser had been sunk by British submarine in the Mediterranean.

Air.—R.A.F. made night raids on a number of localities in N. Germany.

Russian Front.—Berlin radio admitted that Soviet forces had by-passed German defence lines on Kharkov-Byelgorod road.

Africa.—In Libya a British column reported engaged with the enemy S.W. of Gazala. Alexandria had its third air raid in three days.

Indian Ocean.—Trincomalee, Ceylon, raided. 21 Jap planes certainly destroyed, 12 probably destroyed and two more damaged.

Burma.—American Volunteer Group pilots shot down 10 Jap aircraft and damaged 2 without loss.

Philippines.—Washington communiqué indicated that American resistance in Bataan had ended.

Australasia.—Allied bombers carried out heavy raid on Rabaul, New Britain.

APRIL 10, Friday *951st day*

Sea.—Admiralty announced sinking of aircraft-carrier Hermes by Japanese air attack off Ceylon. British submarine sunk two enemy supply ships in Mediterranean.

Air.—R.A.F. made night raid on Ruhr, and also attacked docks at Le Havre.

Mediterranean.—Two more heavy air raids on Malta.

Africa.—Clashes between advanced units in Cyrenaica.

Burma.—Japs launched three-pronged drive from Toungoo.

Philippines.—Washington announced sinking of a Jap cruiser off Cebu by U.S. torpedo boat. U.S. submarine sunk armed Japanese ship near the Celebes.

Australasia.—Japs claimed occupation of Christmas Island. R.A.A.F. raided Koepang, Dutch Timor. Japs raided Port Moresby.

General.—Delhi reported that Congress had rejected British proposals for settlement of Indian problem.

APRIL 11, Saturday *952nd day*

Air.—R.A.F. sweep over N. France.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops reported to be within sight of Bryansk.

Mediterranean.—Two more heavy raids on Malta. R.A.F. made night attack on Crete.

Burma.—Japs launched heavy attack on British positions S.W. of Taungdwingyi.

Philippines.—U.S. War Dept. announced that 12,000 Japanese had landed on the island of Cebu. Intensive air attacks on Corregidor and Fort Hughes.

APRIL 12, Sunday *953rd day*

Air.—Large R.A.F. sweep over N. France. Night attack on Channel ports, the Ruhr, Le Havre, aerodromes in Low Countries and France, and N. Italy.

Mediterranean.—Two more heavy raids on Malta.

Philippines.—Corregidor raided 12 times in 24 hours.

Australasia.—Allied bombers attacked Rabaul in New Britain, Lae in New Guinea and Faisi in the Solomons. Koepang, in Dutch Timor, raided by R.A.A.F.

APRIL 13, Monday *954th day*

Air.—Large-scale sweep over N. France.

Mediterranean.—Malta blitz continued.

Philippines.—10 Japanese air raids on Corregidor. The fort's guns sunk enemy boats in harbour at Mariveles.

General.—Appointments announced of Adm. Sir James Somerville as C.-in-C. Eastern Fleet and of Lord Louis Mountbatten as Chief of Combined Operations.

APRIL 14, Tuesday *955th day*

Air.—R.A.F. daylight sweep over N. France lasted from 10 a.m. to 7.30 p.m. Night raid on industrial targets in the Ruhr and docks at Le Havre.

Russian Front.—Red Army reported making good progress N.E. of Byelgorod.

Mediterranean.—More air raids on Malta. Nine enemy planes brought down.

Burma.—On the Sittang front Chinese withdrew to north of Yedashe.

Indian Ocean.—R.A.F. destroyed or damaged 13 Japanese flying-boats in a raid on Fort Blair in the Andaman Islands.

Philippines.—Corregidor bombed and shelled by Japs for 5th day in succession.

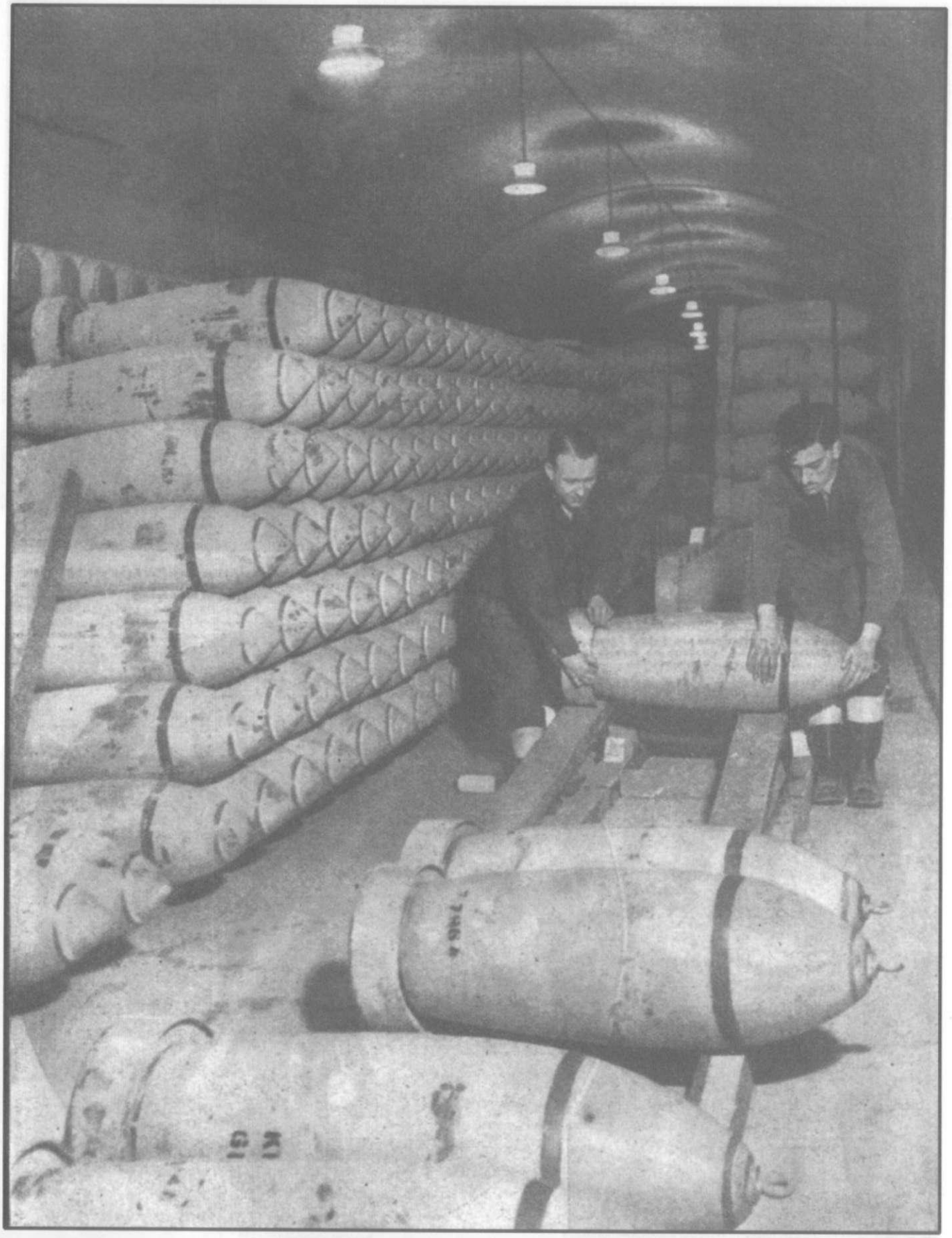
Australasia.—Australian bombers attacked Lae in New Guinea and Koepang in Timor.

Home.—Sir Kingsley Wood introduced the new Budget.

General.—Laval appointed Chief of the Vichy Government. In Australia, Mr. Curtin, the Prime Minister, was sworn in as Minister of Defence. Persian Government broke with Japan.

VICE-ADML. LORD LOUIS MOUNTBATTEN, Chief of Combined Operations, in conference with Combined Operations chiefs at their headquarters. Left to right : Gp. Capt. A. H. Willetts, Rear-Adml. H. E. Horan, Maj.-Gen. J. C. Haydon (who commanded the troops in the Vaagso raid on Dec. 27, 1941), Lord Louis Mountbatten, Air Vice-Mshl. J. M. Robb, Brig. G. E. Wildman Lushington (Royal Marines), Cdre. R. M. Ellis.
Photo, Planet News

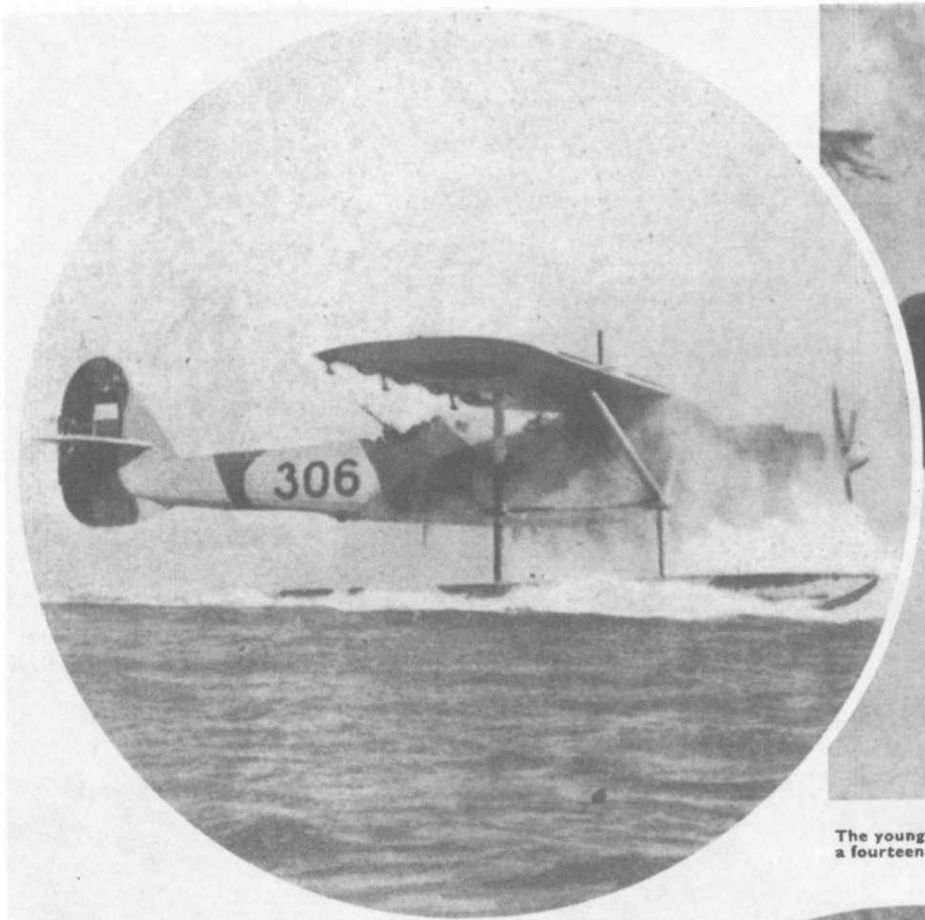
Death from the Air in the Bowels of the Earth



A STREET OF BOMBS in a depot of R.A.F. Maintenance Command driven into the heart of a mountain. The bombs the men are trundling down a ramp are 500-lb. high-explosive blast bombs, and stacked on the left are 500-lb. semi-armour-piercing bombs. For everything except pay and rations—for spare motors or aircraft, for petrol and oil, for uniforms, oxygen, compasses, dope and bombs, or any other of the 750,000 separate items which keep an air force in the air, the R.A.F. must go to Maintenance Command.

Photo, Topical Press

Yugoslavia's Airmen in the Middle East



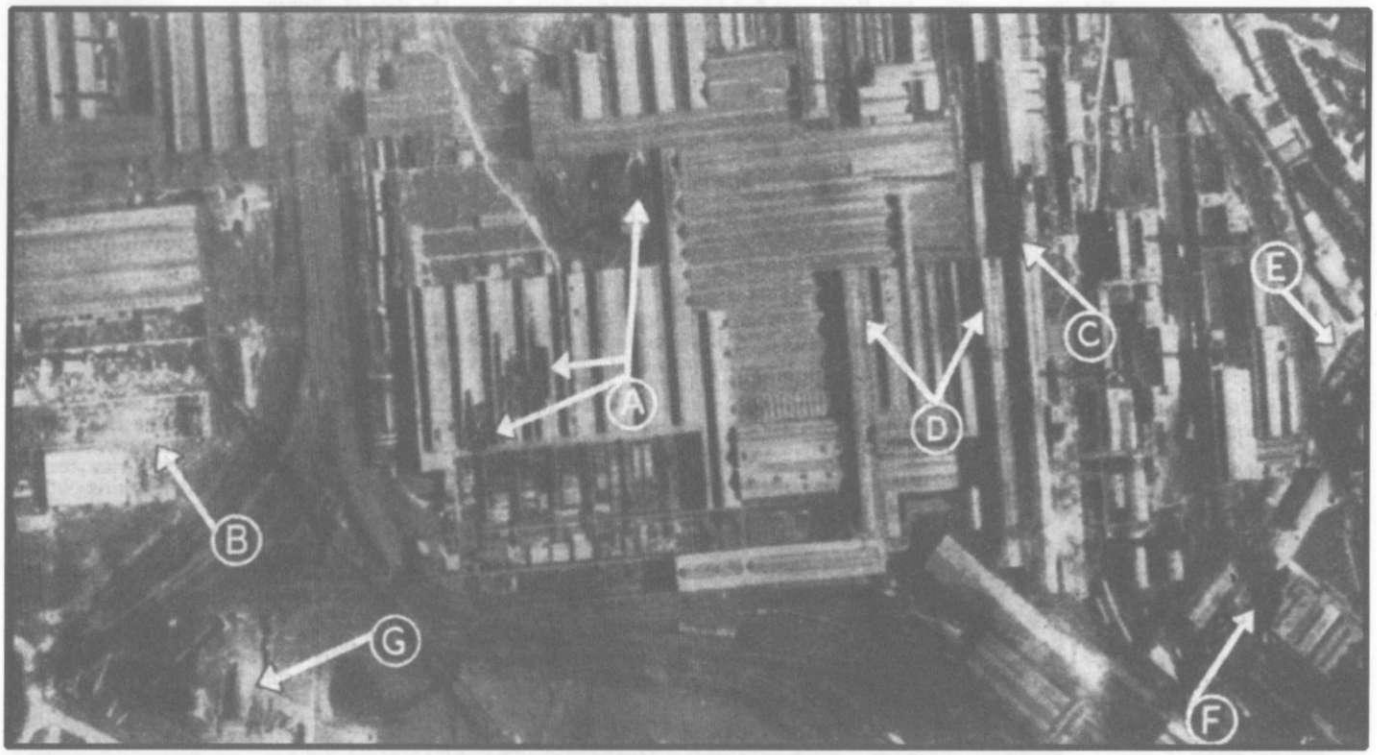
Yugoslav airmen are still carrying on the fight. Above, an aircraft of the Royal Yugoslav Seaplane Squadron on service in the Middle East takes off on patrol.

The youngest member of the Yugoslav Seaplane Squadron, a fourteen-year-old apprentice, stands proudly beneath the emblem of his country.

Left, Yugoslav pilots checking their course before setting out on one of their daily patrols over the Mediterranean. Above, armourers bombing up an aircraft of the Royal Yugoslav Seaplane Squadron.

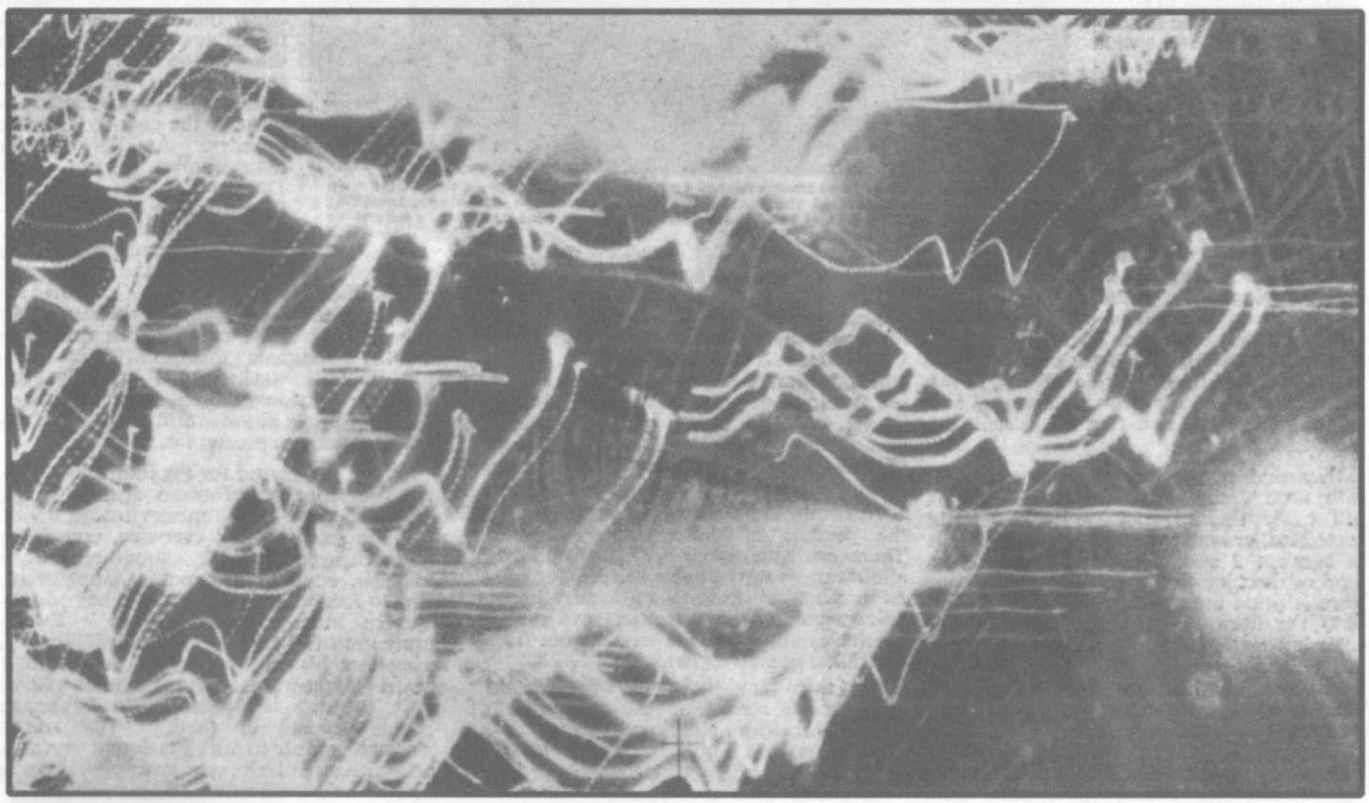
Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

Bombs on Germany—The R.A.F. Strikes Again



BOMBER Command has been taking the war on to Germany's doorstep in no uncertain manner. Among the very heavy raids on Reich territory recently carried out by aircraft of Bomber Command were those on the important Baltic seaport of Lübeck and the Thyssen steelworks at Hamborn, in the Rhineland. The photograph above, taken in daylight by an R.A.F. reconnaissance plane, shows damage done to the Thyssen steelworks by the raid on the night of March 9. (A) Two direct hits on a large shed—probably plate or stock shed. One gap in the roof is 65 yards across and the other 50 yards across. (B) Direct hits on storage yards—damage by fire. (C) Large shed, probably part of the steel rolling works, burned out. (D) Blast effect—roofs damaged over a wide area. (E) Long workshop burned out. (F) Large shed partly destroyed. (G) Large shed badly damaged by blast. The Thyssen steelworks are a great plant with power station and coking plant, eight blast furnaces, 21 basic steel furnaces and four electric steel furnaces. In addition to producing steel for war weapons the factory makes finished railway lines. *Photos, British Official*

DESCRIBING the raid on Lübeck, the C.O. of a Wellington Bomber Squadron said it was the most amazing blitz he had ever seen since he started bombing eighteen months ago. "We found a great area round the docks completely enveloped in flame. It wasn't a question of counting the number of fires ; the whole area was one gigantic fire." So great were the fires started by the R.A.F. that fire brigades from Schwerin, Stettin and Stralsund were sent to Lübeck to cope with them ; Stralsund is 120 miles from Lübeck and Stettin is 150. The photograph of Lübeck below was taken at the beginning of the raid and shows incendiaries burning and fires starting. The thin white lines are the incendiaries and the thicker ones the fires ; they appear as lines on account of the speed of the aeroplane. The target was an important one, for Lübeck has important shipbuilding yards where submarines as well as surface vessels are constructed. As a seaport where many railways and inland waterways join, Lübeck handles a great volume of traffic between Germany and Scandinavia and is used also for sending supplies to Norway, Finland and the North Russian Front.



Critical Indeed Will Be 1942's Harvest

Not often in wartime does Parliament find time or opportunity to discuss the state of British agriculture, but on March 18 there was an interesting and informative debate on the subject in the House of Commons. It was opened by Mr. R. S. Hudson, Minister of Agriculture, on whose speech the present article is largely based.

We may have to tighten our belts a good deal more this year, said Mr. Hudson; but we can do it, and will do it, cheerfully. All the same, no effort is being spared to see that everything that *can* be produced in this country to lessen the belt-tightening, is being produced. Moreover, every ounce of foodstuffs that we produce here lightens the task imposed on our shipping—on that shipping so sorely needed for so many other purposes vital to our final victory. It is only sober truth that the harvest of 1942 may well be a critical factor in the future history, not only of this country, but of the world.

What the Minister of Agriculture had to say concerning British farming was highly encouraging. When this year's ploughing season is completed there will be something like six million more acres under the plough in the United Kingdom than before the war. Our average wheat acreage for the ten years before the war was just over 1,600,000; last year that had been increased by more than a third, and, moreover, whereas before the war a great deal of the produce from that acreage went to the feeding of livestock, practically the whole of it now goes for human consumption. A potato acreage of rather more than 700,000 in 1938 has been raised to well over a million acres—an increase of nearly sixty per cent. In 1938 some 2,500,000 tons of vegetables were produced, and in 1941 this was increased to nearly 4,000,000 tons. The oat acreage is up from 2½ million to nearly 4 million, and this year we are aiming at a record sugar-beet acreage of 405,000—the maximum the existing factories can deal with.

Another interesting fact revealed by the Minister is that we are today probably the most highly mechanized farming country in Europe, and over 7,000 tractors under State ownership are being hired to farmers. Power farming is far less well developed in Germany; though the Nazis have increased their arable acreage, the increased ploughing is dependent on prisoner-of-war labour. In other respects, too, our farming position shows to advantage; thus the cereal harvest in Continental Europe both in 1940 and 1941 yielded less than the pre-war average, and Germany's potato and root crops tell the same tale.

Remarkable progress has been made with farm drainage work. Much land is still badly drained, but we have already completed, or have in hand, the improvement of between 2 and 3 million acres. Every kind of machine that will speed up drainage work is being brought into service. In July 1940 the Ministry of Agriculture did not possess a single excavator; now it has 250, and before the end of the year it hopes to have 400. But there are still thousands of miles of ditches which are not doing their job, and in consequence tens of thousands of acres which are waterlogged and not producing maximum crops. So farmers, landowners and County Agricultural Committees must make it their watchword, "To fight to the last ditch."

But although much has been done to increase the productivity of Britain's soil, much more could be done if the labour were available. Because of the town-dominated politics of our age there has been for many years past a steady drift of the more young and vigorous from the country to the towns; and although in wartime this drift is no longer noticeable, tens of thousands of skilled agricultural workers have been taken into the Army. Thus it is that there is now a distinct shortage of labour in the fields, and this shortage will have to be made good by unskilled labour and by the Women's Land Army. The latter has now passed the 25,000 mark—an increase of more than 15,000 on the total of a year ago; but Mr. Hudson is emphatic that there is still room for many more women on the land, to do work which is second-to-none in national value. Over 90 per cent of the Land Girls are turning out splendidly, and there is no longer any difficulty in getting farmers to take them. More use is to be made, too of school-children, Italian prisoners, and voluntary land clubs.

Not only the farmers are responsible for the product of the nation's foodstuffs. There are now nearly 1,750,000 holders of allotments—nearly double the pre-war figure. At a very conservative estimate allotment holders and private gardeners can produce vegetables to the value of between 10 to 15 million pounds a year.

Are there any limits to what Britain's soil can be made to produce—apart, of course, from the limitations of size? Some part of the land would not repay the costs of cultivation even at wartime prices, but the uncultivable area is much smaller than has often been supposed, since under the stress of war many thousands of acres of swamps, heath and rugged mountainsides have been made to bear bountiful crops, or at least to carry stock. Another limitation is that of labour, to which we have already referred; given more men, given more Land Girls, then the land will provide yet more bountiful harvests.

But there are many who are of the opinion that one of the most important limiting factors is the system of land-holding and land-ownership. Some are urging that large-scale mechanized farming should be favoured, and this has been tried, indeed, in some districts, with striking success, e.g. on the Dagenham estates of the Ford Motor Company. Others take the contrary view, maintaining that the prairie system of farming is quite unsuited to England and the English character, and that it is intensive farming that should be encouraged, i.e. the production of milk and dairy produce, vegetables and fruit—relying for our bread supply still very largely or almost entirely on the import of grain from overseas. But intensive farming demands a degree of cooperation between farmers in the way of marketing, use of tractors, mechanical plant, and so on, and the English farmer up to now has shown himself to be far less cooperatively inclined than the farmers of, say, New Zealand or Denmark. Then, as always, there is the question of expense. Where is the money to come from, asks the farmer—asks, too, the landowner, now staggering under a burden of taxation such as never weighed down the shoulders of his forefathers? So we come to the demand that the State should make itself responsible for the proper development of the country's basic industry. As the eminent agricultural expert, Sir Daniel Hall, has expressed it in a recent book, "Agriculture can only be placed on a sound and progressive footing if the State obtains the control of the land that ownership confers." How far the State has gone already in the matter of financing agriculture may be seen from Sir D. Hall's estimate that in 1938-9 over £100 millions was paid in subsidies to farmers, remission of taxes, and the maintenance of prices above world level. Today the figure must be greater far.

But that is a matter for the future. Today, to quote from Mr. Hudson again, "The crisis of our national fortunes makes it all the more essential that everyone, especially those engaged in the food-production campaign, should think not of what he is going to receive, but of how much he personally can manage to contribute." Every farmer must feel a personal responsibility for seeing that his fields are properly cultivated, and every farm-worker that the farm on which he is working is producing the greatest possible amount of food. "That spirit alone will provide us with maximum production, without which our past efforts and sacrifices may well prove to be in vain."

Many R.A.F. stations have been ordered to grow a large proportion of their own crops, and these pilots of the famous Eagle Squadron are learning something about agriculture on one of the "home farms" now joined to R.A.F. stations to grow food for the airmen. *Photo, Wide World*

Spring's Drive on the Land in Full Swing

Twenty-year-old George Stennett (centre) runs an 800-acre farm of his own, of which 700 acres is under the plough. Here a drill is being filled with oats for sowing. Mr. Stennett also has 250 ewes and 300 lambs.

The National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs gives the youth of Britain a chance to serve their country. Boys of Holbrook School are selecting potatoes from the clamp for use in the school canteen.

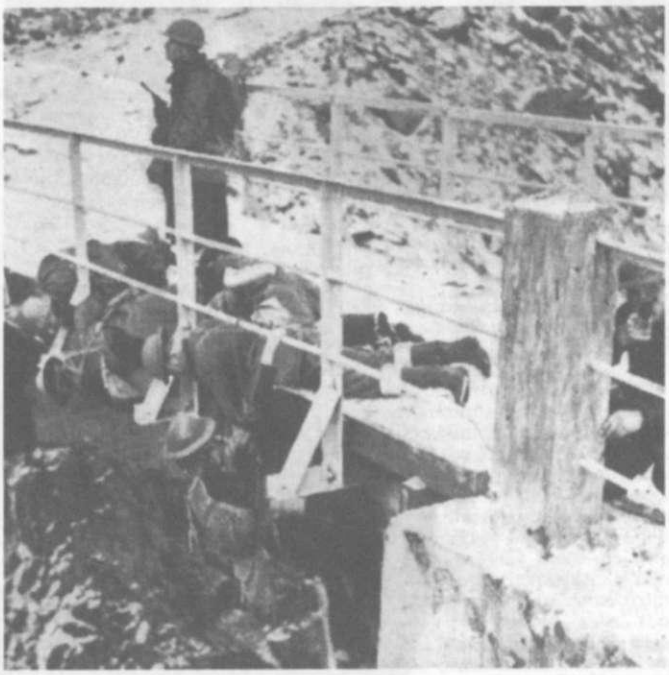
Joan Hill, working with the Women's Land Army on a Northants farm, scatters "the good seed on the land" in a manner which has not varied since the days of the Bible (circle).

Photos, Fox, The Daily Mirror, Central News

Below left, Hertfordshire Land Girls are seen "lining" a ditch in readiness for the motor excavator which another girl is handling. Below right, Peggy Ayres, once in the printing trade, now drives a two-furrow plough.

Into Action On Land Goes the Royal Navy

The Navy, too, is training to strike at enemy-occupied territory. Above, sailors prepare for demolition work. One section establishes telephone communications while others guard them with revolvers and grenades.



A naval demolition party, led by officers, laying charges on a vital bridge-head ready to blow it up.

Above, ratings of a naval raiding party dressed in their special raiding gear assemble on the deck of a warship before transport to shore.

Some of the naval raiding party, carrying lengths of cable and equipment, trudge through a mountain stream on their way to the rendezvous (right).

Photos, British Official

I Was There! .... Eye Witness Stories of the War

We Went With the Raiders to St. Nazaire

Supplementing the official story of the raid on St. Nazaire (*see* page 627), here are eye-witness accounts by Gordon Holman, Reuter's and Exchange Telegraph correspondent, and men who participated in the operations.

OUR journey to St. Nazaire was undertaken with an escort of destroyers (wrote Gordon Holman). There were alarms but absence of air attack. A dramatic moment came when at nightfall we changed direction and began our run into the enemy stronghold. The whole force moved silently and without the slightest glimmer of light. I was in a motor gunboat with Commander "Red" Ryder, and Lieutenant-Colonel A. C. Newman, commanding the naval and military forces respectively.

GORDON HOLMAN, who covered the raid for the Press.

The German flak rose into the sky in staccato bursts of fire. As we entered the estuary tracer shells went up on either side forming a strange Gothic archway of fire.

Suddenly, as we pushed up the estuary towards our objective, two powerful searchlights swept the water, picking up the leading ships as if it had been daylight, and the Germans fired a burst of flak. There was a brief and tense interval and then there came another and more continuous burst of fire, which was answered by the Campbeltown.

The match had been set to the conflagration. In a second the whole river was covered with a fantastic criss-cross pattern of fire, marked by the varied coloured tracer shells and bullets. The roar and rattle of gunfire so filled the night that it was impossible to hear orders shouted only a yard or so from the bridges of the motor launches to the gunners on the deck below. Dozens of searchlights lit the scene, but accurate fire from the ships soon reduced the number.

The British force, which had been moving slowly, cracked on all the speed they had, and continued up river towards St. Nazaire and the docks. They went in face of fire from many shore positions which gave the raiders all they had got. The Campbeltown attracted the defenders' attention and she continued on her way under constant heavy fire from both sides of the river.

Our motor gunboat blazed her way past the last barrier before the entrance to the dry dock. She then swung round in comparatively wide water, and, while shells screamed over the top of us, we watched the Campbeltown finish her last journey by magnificently shooting up a German flak ship, which she left in flames before speeding up for the charge into the dock gates. She piled herself up on them with the sureness of a ferret diving into a hole.

Soon a new and even grimmer note was added to the constant cannonade by the roar of big explosions. "There go the first demolitions," said Colonel Newman. "I told you they would get in." He almost begged to be landed at once, so that he could get to his men on shore.

EVEN GERMANY APPLAUDED

We would not wish to deny the gallantry of the British. Every German is moved by a feeling of respect for the men who carried out this action.

The crew of the Campbeltown under fierce fire forced their ship through the northern lock gates, and carried out a crazy enterprise as well as it could be done. They fought until death or capture.

Broadcast by a German naval spokesman, March 31, 1942

Then our M.G.B. nosed her way round the stern of the Campbeltown, which was stuck up by the bows as if climbing a steep hill, and got alongside the jetty of a small inner harbour. Colonel Newman, giving a final tightening pull to his equipment, jumped ashore followed by his adjutant and small headquarters staff. "Good luck," we shouted, and he disappeared round some blazing buildings, towards the dry dock.

Heavy fire was coming from the direction of the main basin and also across the harbour. Screened from the former by some buildings, we lay alongside the jetty for a few minutes while survivors of the Campbeltown scrambled on board. We then headed out into the main channel again, and immediately came under the fire of German shore positions. "Round the corner" they swept the M.G.B. with rapid fire at a range of less than 50 yards. Although a number of the crew were wounded we replied with machine-gun and pom-pom fire. On the exposed forecastle gun a gunner took careful aim at a German pill-box and scored a direct hit, which caused the captain to shout from the bridge: "Well shot, do it again." But the gunner had fired his last shot—he was killed immediately.

There was no sign of the pace slackening out in the harbour. The glare of fires from both burning German and British vessels made a light nearly as strong as the searchlights. Inshore great fires were raging in many places, and the battle was intensified from time to time by a shattering explosion. A big burst of fire went straight down the inner basin, indicating that the Commandos had secured yet another position and were raking the U-boat moorings with mortars and Brens.

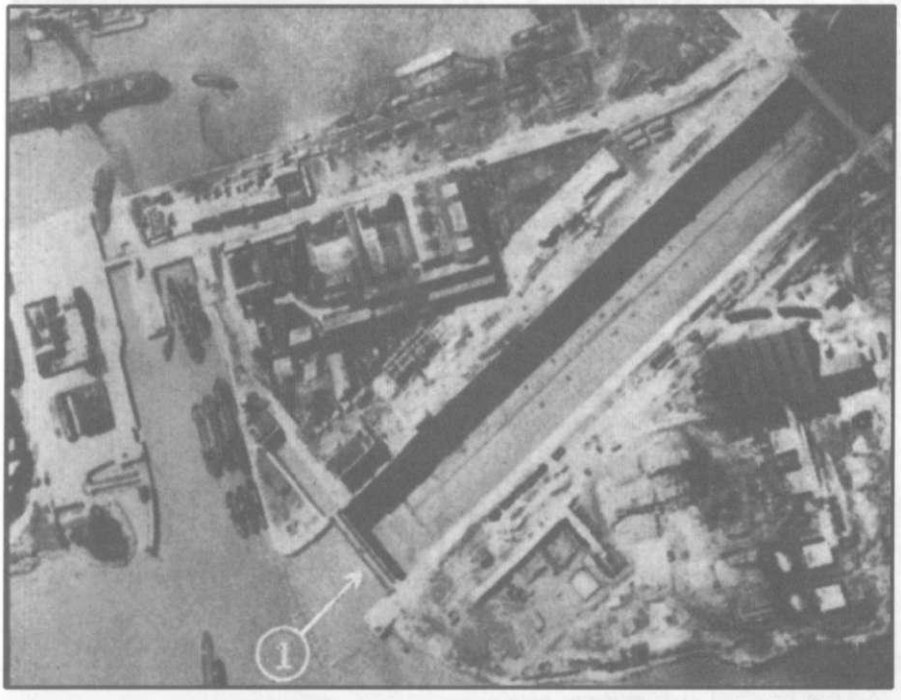
Commander Ryder twice attempted to get alongside the mole, which was still held by the Germans, but the fire power was intense, and we were driven off. The crew of the exposed decks—the Germans were able to fire down on them from concrete emplacements—fought with magnificent courage. Our M.G.B. was the last of the small White Ensign armada left in the harbour. Although there was the possibility that we had been holed, and that damage had been done to vital controls, we made a full-speed dash down the river.

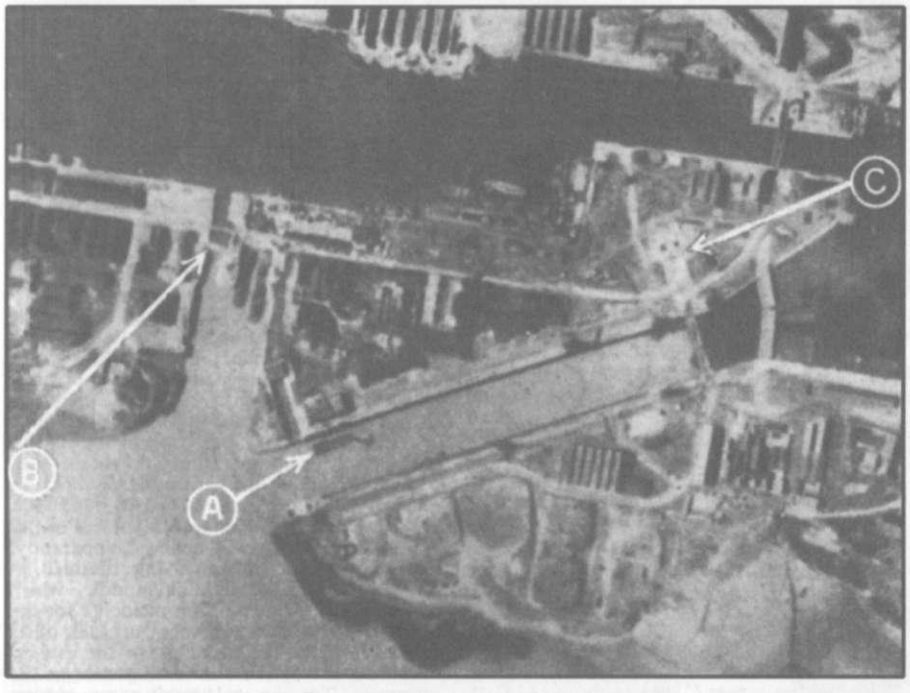
As it was the run was a nightmare experience in which one small M.G.B. became the target for literally hundreds of enemy guns at comparatively short range. Picked out by searchlights we made our best possible speed as gun after gun took up the attack. Only a hard turn to port prevented us running into a German flak ship lying in the middle of the river. She opened fire on the M.G.B. at 20 yards range, but with our last shells we silenced her, and then, as we escaped, saw her destroyed by the concentrated fire of her own shore batteries, who believed, apparently, that it was the M.G.B. lying disabled in mid-stream. Aided by this muddle, which was only one of many such incidents for the Germans, who frequently shot up each other in their anxiety, we raced down the estuary under the fire of the heavier batteries at the entrance. Turning and twisting to avoid the powerful searchlights, we reached the open sea. The deck was littered with wounded men. A young lieutenant crawled about administering first aid as best he could in the dark on the slippery metal decks.

Behind us was a scene of blazing destruction which reminded one of the worst London blitz nights. Fires raged everywhere, and the Germans were still shooting away madly in all directions. The Commandos, continuing their systematic destruction under the cover of assault parties, had clearly persuaded the enemy that large forces were still in occupation. The one tragic moment from our point of view came with the realization that some of the fighting Commando troops on shore could not be evacuated. Colonel Newman had probably realized the likelihood of this contingency arising while

Lieut.-Col. A. C. NEWMAN, who led the Special Service troops in the St. Nazaire raid, was reported missing afterwards. He was attached to the Essex Regt. *Photo, British Official*

Lt.-Cmdr. BEATTIE, in charge of the Campbeltown when she rammed the basin lock gates at St. Nazaire. He was reported missing after the raid. *Photo, G.P.U.*





These two photographs afford proof of the success of the St. Nazaire raid described in this page. Above, photograph taken by a reconnaissance plane before the raid : 1, the lock gate in position. Below, the same area after the raid. The damaged outer lock gate to the Penhouet Basin is seen at (A), lying against the western side of the dock, blown off its sill and badly buckled. The damage to the machine-house (C) that operated the gate can also be seen. The concrete dam is shown at (B). *Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright*

he watched the initial stages of the attack. He raised no question on the matter and not for one minute did he hesitate to go ashore and take his headquarters staff with him. The Commandos themselves in the heat of the battle were probably the least worried of all with regard to their own withdrawal.

The explosions round about the docks which the Commandos engineered covered the survivors from the Campbeltown with debris. The Commandos were fighting with great gusto on shore at this period. They had overcome all difficulties about landing and the speed of their penetration into the strongly held enemy forward position was a great achievement. Sweeping aside all opposition they went straight to their pre-assigned post, the covering parties getting their guns and mortars into position to hold off any enemy attempt to interfere with the destruction of the dock installation.

The highly trained key-men of this part of the operation were the demolition bodies. Working with a speed that must have amazed the Germans, they fixed heavy charges of explosives to bridges, dock gates, and important buildings and blew them sky high in a matter of minutes. One of the biggest bangs in the early stages was the explosion that accounted for the power-house of the dock. Another explosion almost certainly destroyed the gates of the main basin. Thunderous explosions were still going on when the last of the naval forces had to withdraw.

Chief Engineroom-Artificer Harry Howard was on the Campbeltown when she rammed the dock gate.

The ship was definitely well jammed into the block (he said)—a good 10 to 15 feet. The captain did his job wonderfully. The ship was doing about 15 knots at the time. We put on everything we had. Then the crash came and all of us in the engine-room were thrown to the plates.

When we recovered we had to wait for the order "abandon ship." I went to find out what was happening. I learned from the first lieutenant that all steam was finished, so I brought all the men up.

I went on all-fours along the upper deck to where most of the men were still stationed in shelter. The fo'c'sle was blazing. There were showers of bullets of all kinds. As we climbed down the ladder on to the dock some of the men were hit. Others carried the wounded as we ran round the buildings, still under fire, to the point where the motor gun-boat was waiting. This was the boat that had put the military commander and others ashore.

Before we left I found out that most of the men of my department were on board. There was a fusillade of bullets seeming to come from everywhere. For 50 to 70 yards after we pulled out it was terrible.

A naval officer who played a leading part in the attack gave another graphic description of the scene.

How completely the raid took the Germans by surprise (he said) is shown by the fact that it was several minutes between the time their searchlights picked up the British ships as they made their way up the Channel and the time the firing started. It takes a lot of decision to start firing at a strange ship in your waters.

We saw a German guardship of about 600 tons and thought he was going to shoot us up, but before he could fire we got a direct hit on his gun.

As soon as the Germans on shore heard the firing they opened up on to this wretched flak ship of theirs, firing absolutely indiscriminately. They did not seem to mind where their own men were, but just blazed away. They were shooting at their own friends across the dock from the house-tops. Most of the opposition came from the house-tops—some of the high houses gave us a lot of trouble.

Campbeltown's Terrific End

I got the impression that they were ready for the air raid, but I am pretty sure they did not expect us from the sea, otherwise they would not have let us get so near to their dock wall before opening fire.

It was only after we had fired upon this flak ship that they began. Then they sent up fire the like of which I have never dreamed of. Our light craft replied with all the guns they had, but some of our ships were knocked out.

The Campbeltown actually got within a hundred yards of the lock gate before she came under fire. Then a terrific fire was opened on her from all sides, but she soon rammed the lock gate with a tremendous, splintering crash. As she struck I saw a large flash, but what caused it I do not know. Half the Commandos were crowded in the Campbeltown and as soon as she came to rest they leapt ashore.

Lieutenant-Commander Beattie went below with other officers to see that the fuses were all right for the main explosive charge, as the impact of the collision might have disarranged them.

Coming behind the Campbeltown I landed Colonel Newman on the south side of the old entrance to the submarine basin. He went up to join his men in that area.

After that I went across to see the scuttling charges of the Campbeltown go off. We then ordered in another of our light craft, which fired two delayed-action torpedoes at the little lock gate.

A house was burning fiercely not far away, throwing a lurid light over the quay. It had evidently been fired by the Commandos. There was rifle and machine-gun fire all over the place. I saw some men come round a building not far away. They wore blue dungarees, and I thought they were British—until they opened fire on me.

I was ashore about a quarter of an hour waiting for Commander Beattie. I saw about 20 or more of the crew pass me on their way to be re-embarked. I expected the officers would be behind them, but I did not meet any. Commander Beattie was the principal performer in this raid. His name must be mentioned. He was seen ashore by his crew. Whether he lost his way behind some of the buildings I don't know. He may have joined up to fight with the Commandos.

We were unable to bring off Lt.-Col. Newman and some of his men, but I think myself he was expecting that and was perfectly prepared to go on fighting until it got daylight.

Here are some of the Special Service troops who took part in the St. Nazaire raid, photographed on their return. In the centre is the officer who led them. *Photo, Planet News*

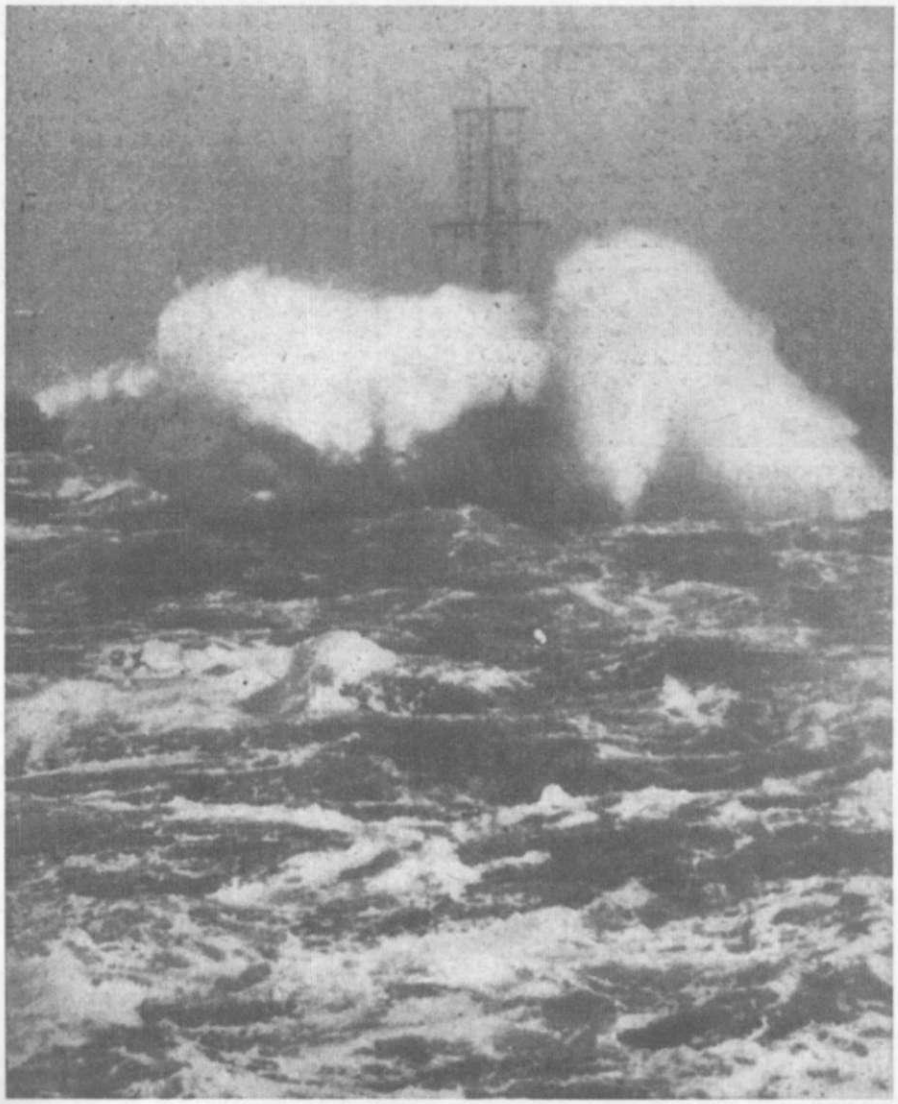
We Weathered a Wild Night in the Atlantic

Besides U-boats and aircraft, our ships have to face another enemy in the North Atlantic the weather—as is vividly described below by an R.N.V.R. Lieutenant in the ex-American destroyer Richmond.

A HARSH yellow sunset and a steeply falling glass gave warning that it was going to blow. By 8.30 p.m., when I took over the watch from the Gunner, the storm was approaching its full fury. The Richmond's motion was wild and fantastic: she was shipping it green and bumping cruelly. The ship was practically hove to. With wheel hard a-starboard, and the starboard engine going dead slow and the port half ahead, it was just possible to keep the ship under control.

A tremendous sea struck the Richmond, rolling her over to a frightening angle and shattering the glass in the wheelhouse window and hurling everybody on the bridge in a sprawling heap to leeward. The roar of the gale drowned the noise of splintering glass, but not the language of the Gunner, who had hit a tender portion of his anatomy on the engine-room telegraph.

The Quartermaster, a young Devon man with just over a year's service, was thrown clear of the wheel, but fought his way up the steep slope of the slippery bridge and again grabbed the spokes of the wheel. "Is she steering all right, Quartermaster?" bellowed the Captain, in a voice which could be just heard faintly above the scream of the gale. "Yes, zur," yelled the Quartermaster. "Everything in the garden's lovely." An odd remark, but one which showed the right spirit.



Shipping green seas, a British destroyer ploughs through the waves on her task of searching for enemy submarines. What it means to be on a destroyer in the full fury of an Atlantic storm is vividly recounted in this page by an R.N.V.R. Lieutenant. *Photo, Keystone*

A still bigger sea struck the Richmond. The ship was not so much rolled over as pressed down by hundreds of tons of water. The roll recorder registered 58 degrees. The destroyer righted herself to an angle of 30 degrees, and there she lay while the sea rained blow after blow after blow. The fuse-box was broken and there was a firework display as the fuses blew. Below decks everything was in darkness since the blowing of the fuses, and the electricians were hard at it running extra leads and rigging emergency lighting. A heavy sea beat in the wardroom scuttles and bent the ship's side, buckling several main frames and the deck. A torrent of water poured down the hatch into the fore messdeck.

At once men jumped to the burst-in scuttles and held them down to stop the inrush of seawater, while seamen, stokers, cooks and stewards set about shoring them up under the directions of the Engineer. Nearly all the proper shores had been washed overboard, but with mess tables, stools, a gun rammer and other odds and ends they made a workmanlike job of it.

Havoc of the Storm

A tour of inspection showed that most of what was movable on deck had been swept overboard. The motor-boat was gone. The searchlight tower was buckled and twisted and presented a ridiculously drunken lopsided appearance. The engine-room escape hatch, a strong steel cylinder riveted to the deck, had been torn off and lay in the lee scuppers.

The ship's cat, Minnie, was missing for a time and there was great anxiety until a leading seaman discovered her crouching terrified in the seamen's bathroom. In some mysterious way she had made her way aft along the upper deck without being swept overboard. The seaman put her down his oilskin trouser leg and carried her back to her terrified kittens. The cat family were then made comfortable in the Engineer's bunk.

With the coming of daylight the storm blew itself out and all hands busied themselves clearing away the wreckage. Shortly after noon the Richmond sighted the coast. One more Atlantic crossing was safely over.

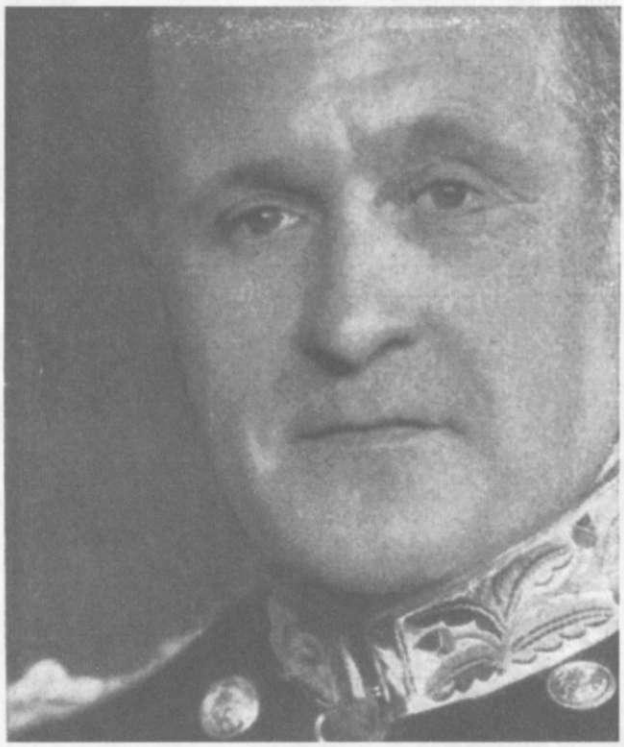
Editor's Postscript

WHEN it was published in December of last year I was not attracted to a book by M. Henry Torrès on Pierre Laval. I think it must have been the dust-cover that put me off: "Life Story of a Cynic, Crook, Traitor." That sounds a little cheap and sensational. But I came upon the book last week in the house of a friend who advised me to read it. He presented me with his review copy, and having once begun to read I was kept engrossed to the final word. In importance I do not hesitate to describe it as one of the major books of the War. Brilliantly translated by Mr. Norbert Guterman, whose name is unknown to me, the literary style is so admirable that I should like to read it all over again in the original French if I can come by a copy. It is something far more than a mere biography of one of the greatest gangsters who have ever exploited the national affairs of a great nation with the same sort of ruthlessness as Al Capone and his gang exploited the vice and dirt of Chicago: it is a lucid and convincing account of French high politics from the Great War of 1914 to the Total War of today, and from its pages the reader, unfamiliar with the low cunning and foul intrigue which characterized the profession of politician in Paris, will gain a noon-clear vision of the evil forces that were long at work for the destruction of the Third Republic.

READ especially in association with the evidence which M. Daladier and M. Léon Blum have so fearlessly given at Riom to the discomfiture of the Fascist French, it will convince even the most fervid Francophile (such as myself for many a year) that there was something rotten in the state of our ally, and had all these facts been known to our own political leaders their whole attitude should have been modified in the face of the Nazi menace. At least it can be said that had all the facts as revealed in this authoritative history of Laval's machinations, plus the Riom evidence, been at the disposal of our own political leaders and their implications made available to the British public through Parliament, it is hardly conceivable that we could have joined forces with France to destroy Hitlerism with the slightest expectation of accomplishing that mighty task together. But that, of course, is only being wise after the event. What every Briton has good cause to be thankful for, with the knowledge now at his command, is that British political life has at no time, and least of all in the present century, bred such self-seeking, such deliberate defeatism, such anti-social knavery as has characterized French politics for many years past.

LAVAL is no lone wolf, M. Torrès names and describes a whole pack of them. He sees in General de Gaulle the one focal point of renascence, and there are many genuine patriots still on French territory who, when the great hour strikes, will assuredly assert themselves and those principles of liberty which France gave more than a hundred years of intellectual and physical energy to establish —and the Pétain-Laval defeatists lost to her in a fortnight. Let me add that, regarded only as the authentic life-story of a master crook, this record of how the ill-favoured spawn of a low-class provincial café-keeper rose to fabulous wealth and international power, and now quisling "dictator" of France, while still remaining a semi-literate boor, makes a fascinating romance of crime which outstrips any invention of the novelist.

AFTER finishing with the Laval book I picked up the latest arrival on my table: Strictly Personal by W. Somerset Maugham, a small but valuable addition to the literature of this war. The only thing about it that I do not like is its title. Mr. Maugham, whose prose style is to me a constant delight, has a very instructive story to tell, and tells it in his own masterly way. His adventurous escape from the Riviera in a coaling boat; his various literary missions for the Ministry of Information, in France, in England, and in America; the amusing and significant contacts he made with many odd personalities in his wide travel, are all narrated with that penetrating eye for character which has won his place among the half dozen foremost English novelists of his time.



Vice-Adm. SIR GEOFFREY LAYTON, appointed Commander-in-Chief, Ceylon, in March 1942, with acting rank of Admiral for the duration of the appointment. *Photo, Lafayette*

STRICTLY PERSONAL is much more important than a brief record of things that happened to a famous writer in the first two years of the War, for it contains the mature and dispassionate reflections of a serious student of modern life whose many years of residence in France, and his intimate knowledge of French character, endow with authority his acute observations on the state of the French people with whom it was Britain's unhappy lot to join hands against Nazism. In all that he tells us of the common people he is objective and therein more acceptable as a contributor to the proper understanding of the immeasurable tragedy of France than if his point of view were "strictly personal."

EVEN his frank and good-humoured account of things as he found them on returning to England has an air of detachment which carries the conviction of "things seen" with an impartial eye. Anyone who reads Strictly Personal will not only be charmed with the personal element of its narrative, but will obtain an authentic picture of a France that went unwillingly to war, ill-prepared, incompetently marshalled and with the will to lose; the reasons for this deplorable attitude of mind being made manifest with greater detail in the description of the miasmatic sludge of French politics which, as I have indicated above, makes the life of the Traitor Laval by M. Torrès so revealing.

HOW's this for stellar prescience? I find it in one of the various rival editions of Old Moore's under the month of May: "Disturbed conditions crop up in Fleet Street after the disappearance of a well-known journal. Almost at the same time a new one arises on unusual lines with a policy designed rather to put the brake on the fast-moving reforms which are now canvassed so eagerly in many quarters." A well-known journal did almost disappear in March, but what is outside all probability is that a new one could arise. Old Moore was reckoning here without the Paper Controller.

HERE is another astrologer glibly interpreting the stars for May: "The passing of the two of the major planets from Taurus into Gemini in May will entirely alter the course of the war. The conjunction of Saturn and Uranus will destroy the conditions that began in 1935 and reached a climax in 1939. This spring and summer will witness the destruction of the Nazi regime, and the removal of Germany and Italy from the ranks of our enemies. Moreover, an even more welcome change will follow the passing of Saturn and Uranus out of Taurus, for we shall finally free ourselves from the hampering and restricting influences that have held us in check since the beginning of the war, and shall be in a position to follow a policy of vigorous offence." I will only comment on this excerpt which I've taken from an article on the Astrological Outlook by Vivian B. Robson, B.Sc., in The Queen of March 25, by expressing the hope that these most desirable things may happen, while stating my conviction that Saturn and Uranus will have no more to do with the course of events than Flanagan and Allen.

A CORRESPONDENT writes, apropos an article which appeared in the 123rd number of THE WAR ILLUSTRATED, that the terminus of the Assam-Bengal Railway is at Saikhooa Ghat on the southern bank of the Sobit River, Assam, and not at Sadiya on the north bank, as stated in the article. My correspondent, Mr. E. Clear Hill, A.M.I.E.(Ind.), informs me that he constructed the first portion of the road from Sadiya to Sonpura when he was in charge of the newly created P.W.D. subdivision of Sadiya in 1913-14, so that I must regard this correction as authoritative.

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